University of Alberta

The Evolution of French Anti-Americanism, 1990-2001

by

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ABSTRACT

Franco-American relations have been in crisis throughout these early years of the twenty-first century. As a result, it is commonly supposed that anti-Americanism has escalated in France because of a negative French reaction to recent American policies. This assumption is fair, but also inadequate. French anti-Americanism is a multi-faceted dynamic with deep historical roots. It is true that French anti-Americanism escalated in recent years, but this tendency has more to do with events and dynamics in the 1990s than in the twenty-first century. Through an examination of French polling and editorial opinion sources, this thesis will demonstrate that immediately following the Cold War, the French perceived America more as a global hegemon, a self-interested nation, an obstacle to European political and military autonomy, and an overwhelming social and cultural influence. All of these perceptions help to explain how French anti-Americanism has evolved and escalated in the post-Cold War era.

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There are a number of people I would like to acknowledge for their contributions to the successful completion of this thesis. First, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Scot Robertson, for his invaluable guidance on research and editorial matters and for his patience with me throughout the long process of writing and revision. Also, I am grateful to Dr. Greg Anderson for his keen interest in my work and for providing additional direction to my research and ideas. I wish to thank these professors along with Dr. Dennis Sweeney and Dr. Christopher Mackay for coming together as my Examining Committee. They were a challenging and gracious audience to discuss my ideas with.

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INTRODUCTION

When one considers contemporary anti-Americanism in France,[1] undoubtedly the recent "crisis" in Franco-American relations comes to mind. Since 2001, France and America[2] have clashed over the International Criminal Court, the Kyoto Protocol, the role of NATO, strategies combating Islamic terrorism, and most notably the Iraq War. Indeed, Franco-American affairs have been tumultuous to the point of crisis in the twenty-first century.[3] This situation has inflamed and exposed anti-American sentiment in France. However, if one only focuses on these political disputes to understand French anti-Americanism, a large part of the issue will be overlooked.

Anti-Americanism encompasses much more than resentment of American policy and has historical roots that predate the twenty-first century. Anti-Americanism may be defined as a deep-rooted, visceral, and negative predisposition to the United States that is both consistent and hostile.[4] Accordingly, anti-Americanism is more than resentment of what the United States *does,* it is also resentment of what the United States *is.*[5] With this in mind, a comprehensive understanding of French anti-Americanism involves looking deep into French society and early into French history.

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[1] Contemporary anti-Americanism refers to anti-Americanism in the twenty-first century.
[2] For the purposes of this thesis, "America," "Americanism," and "anti-Americanism" are used in reference to the United States of America.
[3] For the purposes of this thesis, the recent "crisis" in Franco-American relations will refer to the tumultuous Franco-American relationship from 2001 to present. For more discussion on where France and the United States have found disagreement on global issues see: Paul Gallis, "France: Factors Shaping Foreign Policy, and Issues in U.S.-French Relations", *CRS Report For Congress.* (May 19, 2006). http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/67818.pdf
[4] Paul Hollander, *Anti-Americanism: Critiques at Home and Abroad 1965–1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), viii.
[5] Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert O. Keohane, *Anti-Americanisms in World Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), Introduction.

In recent years, several scholars have investigated French society and history to rationalize anti-Americanism in France.[6] A review of their work indicates that the issue can be explained in several ways. Some scholars describe French anti-Americanism as a primarily elite-driven phenomenon; others explain it as a side effect of centuries of political quarrelling and rivalry between France and America. Some describe French anti-Americanism as resentment of American hegemony, American-led globalization, or America's pervasive culture; while others explain it to be the result of French scapegoating and political exploitation. To survey the complex and deep-rooted nature of anti-American sentiment in France, it is important to consider all of these scholarly perspectives. However, to fully understand *why* the French resent America, this thesis posits that it is also necessary to investigate *how* the French perceive America.

Within the scholarly discourse on French anti-Americanism, only one scholar has offered a substantial investigation into French perceptions of America. In his article, "What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000-2004", Richard Kuisel used polling data to determine how the French perceive America. Through this method of research, he has stepped beyond the theoretical domain to more accurately identify why the French resent America. A discussion of Kuisel's scholarship therefore provides a clearer and more detailed understanding of anti-Americanism in France.

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[6] Expressing intrigue into recent Franco-American tension, more scholarly works have addressed French anti-Americanism between the years 2000 and 2006 than during any other period.

Within his primary period of polling research, 2000-2004, Kuisel identified the prevalence of anti-American sentiment in France. He found that the French generally resented what America *did*: America was perceived as a domineering and self-interested nation. Also, Kuisel found that the French generally resented what America *was*: America was consistently regarded as a violent, racist, and materialistic society. Beyond identifying such anti-American sentiment, Kuisel revealed some important trends in French opinion. Within his primary research period, he discovered that French perceptions of America grew increasingly negative. Furthermore, in contrasting his 2000-2004 findings to French opinion from the preceding decades, Kuisel revealed that French perceptions of America were also worsening throughout the 1990s. From this observation, Kuisel concluded: "it was the 1990s that ushered in the current darker disposition of the French toward America."[7]

Considering the recent crisis in Franco-American relations, one might expect to find that French perceptions of America grew increasingly negative between 2000 and 2004. However, the observation that French perceptions of America dramatically worsened *before* these years is surprising. Accordingly, Kuisel's research has not only provided a more detailed look at French anti-Americanism, it has challenged the scholarly discourse on French anti-Americanism with some innovative questions: Could it be that the image of America in France was negative and worsening *before* the recent crisis in Franco-American relations? If so, why might the French be increasingly negative

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[7] Richard Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000–2004," *French Politics, Culture and Society, 22,* 3 (2004): 101.

towards America in the 1990s? Would such a trend imply that French anti-Americanism became more prevalent and severe in the post-Cold War era?[8]

The principal purpose of this thesis is to explore the above three questions with greater evidence and analysis than is currently found in literature on French anti-Americanism. While Richard Kuisel is the pre-eminent scholar to observe that the American image in France worsened during the 1990s, his evidence confirming and explaining this phenomenon is limited. In his article examining the American image in France with polling data, Kuisel's research focus was on the years 2000–2004. Consequently, his investigation into America's image in France during the 1990s was restricted to a brief analysis of trends in a few polling data.[9] To his credit, Kuisel did focus on post-Cold War French anti-Americanism in a preceding article entitled "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again: The Paradox of French Anti-Americanism." But in this work, Kuisel's explanation for escalating French anti-Americanism was based more on suspicion than concrete evidence.[10] Given the paucity of serious scholarship on the alleged intensification of post-Cold War French anti-Americanism, this thesis will

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[8] For the purposes of this thesis, the "post-Cold War" era, period, or variety of anti-Americanism will be bookmarked by the end of the Cold War (1990) and the beginning of the "new" world order that has arguably ensued following September 11, 2001.

[9] In his article, "*What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000-2004*", Kuisel referenced a few polling data from the 1980s and the 1990s in a section labelled "Trends." See: pp. 101-102. The polling data discussed in this section was minimal in comparison to Kuisel's polling analysis between the years 2000 and 2004.

[10] Kuisel formed his theory of escalating 1990s anti-Americanism in a 2001 article entitled "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again: The Paradox of French Anti-Americanism." In this article, Kuisel's theory was based on suspicions that anti-Americanism was getting worse after the Cold War because of new external pressures on France. It was a full 3 years later that Kuisel published an article examining polling data entitled "What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000-2004." In this article, Kuisel pointed to a few data that verified his prior suspicion that the image of America in France was likely deteriorating in the 1990s.

undertake a more thorough investigation into how the French perceived America during the post-Cold War era. This thesis will examine French perceptions of America in two ways: through an analysis of French opinion polls and through a survey of French editorial and opinion articles.

Expanding upon Richard Kuisel's brief polling analysis of the post-Cold War era, this thesis will analyze a wider range of French opinion surveys from the period. All of the polls examined in the thesis have been conducted by professional polling agencies that practice a random sampling methodology. Accordingly, the discussed polling data may accurately portray mass French opinion of America. Complementing the polling analysis, this thesis will seek to more accurately and comprehensively investigate French perceptions of America by surveying French editorial and opinion articles. Spanning the years from 1990 to 2001, this thesis will discuss dozens of French articles collected from several leading news magazines in France. Most of the editorials in the news magazines were written by French intellectuals for an intellectual audience. Thus, the periodical opinion analysis may accurately portray intellectual French opinion as opposed to the mass French opinion represented in the polls. Moreover, some of the periodicals represent a left political bias while others represent a right political bias. Thus, on occasion, the periodical opinion research may aid in distinguishing left-wing French perceptions from right-wing French perceptions.

This thesis will organize the polling and periodical opinion research by explaining the post-Cold War image of America in France according to five themes. First, general trends concerning America's reputation in France over the last two decades will be

revealed thorough polling analysis. After these general trends are established, the thesis will explore four more specific aspects of the image of America in France: America as an international power, America as an ally and influence in French political affairs, America as a social and economic model, and American popular culture and its influence in France. As post-Cold War French perceptions of America are dissected in these themes by polling and editorial opinion research, this thesis will more accurately and comprehensively explore the three innovative questions Kuisel's scholarship has put forward.

Although inconsistencies will be shown in French opinion, this thesis will explicitly answer the three questions it is seeking to investigate. In general, this thesis will demonstrate that 1) the image of America in France was negative and deteriorating during the 1990s, evidently before the twenty-first century crisis in Franco-American relations; 2) the image of America worsened during the 1990s because the United States was increasingly perceived as a self-serving hegemon in politics and economics, an overbearing influence in French political affairs, and an overwhelming social and cultural threat to France after the Cold War; and 3) French anti-Americanism has therefore increased in occurrence and intensity during the post-Cold War era.

CHAPTER 1:

Anti-Americanism in France: Scholarly Perspectives

Before this thesis begins a deeper investigation into French perceptions of America, it is important to discuss the existing literature on French anti-Americanism. Over the years, several scholars have commented on the phenomenon and rationalized its prevalence in many different ways. In an attempt to integrate and clarify the variety of scholarly perspectives on French anti-Americanism, this chapter will discuss eight major theories or arguments for its existence.

According to contemporary literature, French anti-Americanism may be explained as 1) an irrational predisposition instilled by French elites, 2) an aversion against an historic adversary, 3) a retaliation towards an historic rival, 4) an envious resentment of the global hegemon, 5) a charge against the perpetuator of globalization, 6) a means by which France protects and promotes its national identity, 7) a way in which France attempts to re-establish its eighteenth century notion of *Grandeur*, and 8) an attempt by France to scapegoat America for its own failures. The lines drawn between these scholarly perspectives may sometimes blur. Nevertheless, distinctions have been made to highlight subtle yet important discrepancies. Due to the complexity of French anti-Americanism, the assortment of scholarly perspectives presented in this chapter should not be considered mutually exclusive to one another. Rather, the variety of explanation should be considered as a whole to portray the deep-rooted and multi-faceted nature of French anti-Americanism.

1.1 Elite Creation

Some scholars of French and European history, such as Philippe Roger, James W. Ceaser, and Tony Judt, contend that French anti-Americanism is a largely irrational construct that has been created by European intellectuals since the enlightenment. According to the Elite Creation perspective, negative elite judgments of America over the last 300 years have gradually pervaded the psyche of French society and established anti-Americanism.

In the wake of September 11, 2001, Philippe Roger observed that a majority of articles in major French newspapers reflected condemnation of the United States rather than sympathy for it. How, questioned Roger, could citizens of France—a country with western values and itself a previous victim of Islamic terrorism—choose to express solidarity with Islamic terrorists over their American allies? He claimed that such peculiarity in French society could only be explained through an understanding of the historical construct of anti-Americanism. In his view, anti-Americanism was instilled in French society by an elitist resistance to America over time.[11]

James W. Ceaser refined the *Elite Creation* perspective in a concise manner. In his article, "A Genealogy of Anti-Americanism,"[12] he outlined five major ways that the French intelligentsia has, over time, instilled anti-Americanism in French society. His five points are: 1) Degeneracy and Monstrosity; 2) Rationalistic Illusions; 3) The Specter

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[11] Philippe Roger, *The American Enemy: A Story of French Anti-Americanism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), Introduction.
[12] James W. Ceaser, "A Geneology of Anti-Americanism," *Public Interest* (Summer 2003): 3–19.

of Racial Impurity; 4) The Empire of Technology; and 5) Soullessness and Rampant Consumerism. These will be briefly dealt with in turn.

1.1.1 Degeneracy and Monstrosity:

In the eighteenth century, fascination with the New World led to a wide range of scientific studies of the Americas. A leading European biologist, the Compte de Buffon, arrived at the "degeneracy thesis" from his study of the American continent. Based primarily on atmospheric conditions and soil nitrate levels, Buffon believed that America was a "continent in decline."[13] He argued, irrationally it appears, that "even dogs cease to bark" after having breathed a while in the American atmosphere.[14] He claimed that "no sooner did the Europeans debark from their ships than they began the process of decline, physical and mental."[15] The degeneracy thesis was also reinforced by the leading European *expert* on America, Cornelius de Pauw. Even though de Pauw had never visited the American continent, in 1768 he claimed that America was a "vast and sterile desert" whose climate nurtured "astonishingly idiotic" men.[16] For some decades, the degeneracy thesis would be accepted by the elite class of French society. They believed that because of its degeneracy, America was incapable of producing a political system or culture of any merit. Buffon and de Pauw's outlandish biological claims about America would soon be rebutted, but not before damage had been done to America's image within the French intelligentsia.

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[13] Ibid., 6
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

1.1.2 Rationalistic Illusions:

Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson were instrumental in refuting the negative perceptions of American nature by the end of the eighteenth century. One claim they were not able to disprove, however, was that the quality of life and political system of America were inferior to France. As a new country on the road to self discovery, America understandably had little to offer in the form of high culture. This disenchanted European elites. Moreover, the French intelligentsia in the nineteenth century consisted mostly of romantic thinkers who believed that a country ought to be based on abstract universal principles of nature and science. American-style democracy was a disappointment to them because it was governed by "reflection and choice".[17] American society was criticized for giving too much control to the "ignorant masses".[18] This has always concerned the elite.

1.1.3 The Specter of Racial Impurity:

From the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the elite generally viewed humanity in a racial hierarchy. The French aristocrat, Arthur de Gobineau, was incredibly influential at spreading racist theories throughout the elite class in the nineteenth century. He has been referred to as the "father of racialist thinking".[19] The general premise of racial theory at the time was that human races differed according to strength, intelligence,

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[17] Ibid., 6-7
[18] Ibid., 7
[19] Ibid.

and other attributes. The Aryan race was perceived to be superior. It was believed that racial mixing would be either impossible or that it would result in an inability to sustain biological "fecundity" or fruitfulness among human beings; and if races became mixed, the higher evolved races would simply be brought down to a lower standard. Since Europe had already begun a process of "interbreeding," America was judged to be the "great white hope" for the future of the Aryan race and humanity.[20] As expected, elites were disappointed at the homogeneity of American culture. Europe, it appeared, was dumping its "garbage races" upon the shores of America and these people were mixing with the Anglo-Saxons. To racialist elite thinkers, it seemed that "America was creating a new race, the last race, which was no race at all."[21] While racialist thinking such as this has largely disappeared in recent decades among French society, racial theories have still managed to subconsciously slip into the social sciences and influence the French today. America, for example, is still criticized for its homogeneity. This is a direct result of the elitist racial theorizing of the nineteenth century.

1.1.4 The Empire of Technology:

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, America was in a phase of intense industrial expansion. At this time the United States became the symbol for modern industrial methods. The French elites viewed America, the creator of the assembly line, as a country of sheer pragmatism without a soul. They associated America

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[20] Ibid., 8-9
[21] Ibid., 9

with a mentality of "technologism"; a view that in America, life consisted merely of striving after gain, riches, and influence. This has carried over into French perceptions of America today. "Long in advance of Hollywood movies or rap music, the spread of American culture was likened to a form of a disease."[22]

1.1.5 Soullessness and Rampant Consumerism:

Stemming from a belief of the "empire of technology" in the twentieth century, French elites developed a view that America was guilty of senseless "consumption for the sake of consumption."[23] American culture, it was believed, absorbed the unique and authentic and turned it into the uniform and the standard. American society was judged by the elite as a soulless and greedy capitalist mass. The negative perceptions of the American "consumer society" continue to flourish among the elite today and negatively influence French opinions of American culture.

Through his chronological and thematic overview of the French intelligentsia's history of anti-Americanism, James W. Ceaser adds insight to the perception that anti-Americanism is a deeply rooted phenomenon within French society. However, another important addition must be made to his interpretation of French anti-Americanism: the French elite have traditionally been leftist in ideology. This theme has been discussed in greater detail by Philippe Roger and Tony Judt. Roger argues that as American industrial power grew and its capitalist influence spread across the globe, the elites of French

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[22] Ibid., 10-11
[23] Ibid., 11-12

society were outraged. During the 1930s, argues Roger, French elites felt threatened by U.S. capitalist culture. This spurred publications such as *l'Abomination American*, 1930; *Le cancer American*, 1931; and pamphlets that cried, "Out with the people and their products, their methods and their lessons, their dances and their jazz! Let them take back their Fords and their chewing gum."[24] According to Roger, anti-Americanism was not new to the elite class in the 1930s, but it certainly became more expressive in this decade as American capitalist ideology and culture started to infiltrate French society.

Tony Judt similarly explains the leftist nature of French elites as a root cause of anti-Americanism in the twentieth century. After the Second World War, argues Judt, French intellectuals blindly sided with communism because Germany's fascism had been the pre-eminent danger. Meanwhile, there existed a consensus in France that the republican parliamentary democracy of the 3rd Republic was responsible for the disaster of 1940. The left-wing character of the French intelligentsia was reinforced with anti-American communist ideology by the outbreak of the Cold War. Therefore, argues Judt, French elites have been inherently leftist, anti-capitalist, and anti-American in the twentieth century.[25]

Philippe Roger, James W. Ceaser, and Tony Judt all contend that anti-Americanism is deeply rooted among French elites. Even though elite misjudgments about America may be refuted today, these authors argue that elite perspectives have still managed to influence and pervade the psyche of French society over time. If anti-

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[24] "Spot the Difference," *The Economist*. 24 December, 2005), 76.
[25] Irwin Wall, "From Anti-Americanism to Francophobia: The Saga of French and American Intellectuals," *French Historical Studies, 18*, 4 (1994). Irwin Wall explains the opinions of European scholar Tony Judt.

Americanism is indeed "the lingua franca of the intellectual class,"[26] it has arguably been produced and instilled by French elites.

1.2 Historical Enemies

Beyond the Elite Creation perspective, other commentators have explained anti-Americanism as a deeply rooted historical phenomenon. John J. Miller and Mark Mollesky, for example, have looked at the contentious history of Franco-American relations and concluded that anti-Americanism is merely a bitter French reaction towards an historical enemy. The argument of Miller and Mollesky forms the premise of the Historical Enemies perspective.

In their article "The Gauls, de Gaulle, the Gall," Miller and Molesky argue that the popular sugar-coated story of Franco-American friendship is an historical myth.

> There is a storybook version of Franco-American relations. It begins with the valor of Lafayette and French naval support at Yorktown, continues through the Louisiana purchase (usually interpreted as a benign real estate transaction), and makes sure to mention the Statue of Liberty. Then it describes American doughboys fighting in the trenches beside their French comrades during the First World War and, a generation afterward, GIs storming the beaches of Normandy to liberate freedom-loving France from the Nazis. Later, during the Cold War, it has France standing with us shoulder to shoulder as we confront the Soviet threat. Isn't that our history?[27]

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[26] Jean Francois Revel as cited in Caesar, *Public Interest, 4.* Even though Revel did not go into as much detail as other scholars of the *Elite Creation* perspective, he also expressed the idea that French elites are inherently anti-American.

[27] John Miller and Mark Molesky, "The Gauls, de Gaulle, the Gall," *National Review,* 25 October 2004, 47.

Miller and Molesky explain that, in reality, neither nation has ever really worked with the other as an ally; but rather, France and the United States have only cooperated out of political and military necessity.

In this view of Franco-American relations, France did not assist the United States in the War of Independence out of good will and friendship. Rather, France intervened in the American war solely to weaken the power of its ancient European rival, Britain. Immediately after the war, France tried to limit the size of the newly forming U.S. to limit the country's potential. France and the United States fought each other in the little known "Quasi-War" of 1798–1800 "during which France became the first military enemy of the United States following the ratification of the constitution."[28] Napoleon Bonaparte and Thomas Jefferson were not allies. Rather, Jefferson referred to Napoleon as "a great scoundrel," "a moral monster," and "the ruthless destroyer of ten millions of the human race."[29] The United States nearly fought France instead of Britain in the war of 1812, and wary of French intentions in the Americas, the U.S. government issued the Monroe doctrine. During the Civil War, and against the wishes of the U.S. government, Napoleon's imperial nephew supported the South. General Ulysses Grant called it "a direct act of war against the United States."[30] After World War I, the French battled with the United States in the political arena over how to handle the vanquished Germans. In World War II, the Americans intervened on behalf of France to stop the aggressive ambitions of Nazi Germany, but found the French extremely uncooperative. "'Next to the

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[28] Ibid., 47
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

war,' said General Eisenhower, '[the French] have caused me more trouble in this war than any single factor.'"[31] After the war, France and the U.S. had strong disagreements over German rearmament. France and the United States clashed over the Suez Canal crisis of 1956. This led France, under Charles de Gaulle, to assert its autonomy from the United States by starting its own nuclear weapons program and pulling out of NATO in 1966. During the remainder of the Cold War, France and the U.S. ardently opposed each other on many issues, the most significant being Vietnam. Since the end of the Cold War, the French have taken direct opposition to the United States. "Their leaders condemn the United States for being a 'hyperpower' and whose influence on the world stage must be balanced—'balanced' being a euphemism for 'opposed.'"[32] In 1996 François Mitterrand, French President from 1981-1995, declared: "We are at war with America…a permanent war... a war without death. They are very hard, the Americans—they are voracious. They want undivided power over the world."[33] In the last 15 years, France has butted heads with the United States over the Gulf War of 1991, the Bosnian crisis of 1992 and 1995, the Kosovo War of 1999, and the Iraq war of 2003.[34]

If one reads Miller and Mollesky's account of Franco-American history, it seems quite logical that anti-Americanism would exist in France. If the two nations have been historical enemies, constantly disagreeing and clashing over political aims, anti-Americanism may simply be a side effect of this turbulent relationship. While the

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[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid., 48
[33] Ibid.
[34] For more discussion on where France and the United States have found disagreement on global issues see Paul Gallis, "France: Factors Shaping Foreign Policy, and Issues in U.S.-French Relations." *CRS Report For Congress,* 19 May 2006.

Historical Enemies perspective is effective in bringing home the point that Franco-American history has not been as pleasant as commonly supposed, it is also guilty of overstating the degree of antipathy that existed in Franco-American relations. Miller and Mollesky have essentially compiled a list of Franco-American tensions and labelled it history. Surely one could point out negative aspects in U.S. relations with all of her allies and it would appear that Canada, or Britain, for example, are great historical enemies of the United States. This is simply not true. The French, like the other allies of the United States, are called allies because they have a functional, cooperative, and peaceful relationship with America. History can certainly demonstrate that France and the U.S. have had moments of bitterness in their relations, and this is important to note for the anti-Americanism discussion. Nevertheless, calling France and America historical enemies is too dramatic. One should not forget the moments of cooperation and mutual triumph between France and the United States from Lafayette to the fall of the Berlin Wall.

1.3 Rivalry

A subtly different way of understanding historical contentions between France and America is to view the two nations as rivals instead of enemies. Some academics believe that "France quarrels with America not because the pair is so different but because they are so alike."[35] If this is the case, anti-Americanism may be explained as

[35] "Spot the Difference", 76.

French retaliation towards an historic rival. This explanation of French anti-Americanism will be termed the *Rivalry* perspective.

Throughout their conjoined histories, it may be argued that France and the United States have been locked in competition out of likeness. Writers in *The Economist* have exemplified such a perception.

> The modern French and American polities may have evolved quite differently… but both emerged as highly codified, anti-clerical, secular republics. Both…can articulate unapologetically what their country stands for. Born of revolutions, America and France each established republics inspired by Enlightenment thinking, and based on freedom and individual rights. Within the same year, 1789, both the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the American Bill of Rights were drafted.[36]

According to *The Economist,* as France and America began to develop and chart their own course for liberal democracy, both countries had a sense of greatness and a deep belief in the universalism of their political models. The Americans stressed liberty, and the French stressed civilization, but both shared the ambition to spread their political system abroad.[37] Scholars such as Marie-France Toinet have echoed the claim that tension in Franco-American relations, resentment, and fear have all emerged from historical competition.

> The root of any anti-Americanism as well as anti-French sentiment—if there are such things—lies in that competitive and compulsive feeling of each nation that it has something unique to offer to humankind. Each fears that this unique contribution is threatened by the other. The Americanization of France is seen as destroying the essential values of French civilization. French criticisms of American foreign-policy, on the other hand, are seen as undermining the credibility of its democratic rationale... in that respect, a veritable mixture of fascination and rejection

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[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.

> will always characterize French perceptions of the United States and vice versa.[38]

France and the United States certainly can be viewed as having had similar ambitions for their countries and ideologies. Accordingly, the French have taken pride in being an alternative to the *American way*, particularly when the *French way* is alleged to be superior. The former French Prime Minister, Dominique DeVillepin, exemplified this attitude in a recent statement: "What an honor to be French, loyal to a... responsibility to bestow a conscience, a soul upon our earth. Our democracy was built upon the affirmation of universal values... France's destiny is to enact our universal and humanist dream."[39]

If one believes the contention that France and America squabble because of similar and competing political aims, everything from Charles de Gaulle's efforts in the 1960s to "turn Europe into a French-led superpower"[40] to Jacques Chirac's resistance of the American-led war in Iraq, may be understood more clearly. As with the Historical Enemies perspective, anti-Americanism may be implicit here as a side effect of a turbulent Franco-American relationship. By looking at French anti-Americanism through the lens of the Rivalry perspective, however, the anti-American dilemma does not seem as severe. An enemy and a rival are not the same. A rival necessitates competition; an enemy necessitates war. With this understanding, one may be more inclined to view

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[38] Marie-France Toinet, "French Pique and Piques Francaises," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 497 (1988): 133–141, 141.
[39] "Spot the Difference," 76.
[40] Ibid.

French anti-Americanism in the *Rivalry* perspective as a form of competitive trash-talk against a rival who has become increasingly overbearing in recent decades.

1.4 Hegemonic Resentment

A central explanation of anti-Americanism in the world today is that it prevails as a response to American hegemony, that anti-Americanism is an expression of discontent with the oppressive and overbearing global empire of the United States. In France, anti-Americanism has been defined by some as a resentment and resistance to American hegemony in recent history. This understanding of French anti-Americanism will be referred to as the *Hegemonic Resentment* perspective.

According to Franco-American relations expert Richard Kuisel, the United States has appeared to act more as an unchallenged hegemonic superpower during the twentieth century. Particularly with America's rise to global supremacy after the Cold War, Kuisel argues that the French perceive America to be "pursuing its national interest, imposing its will on others and unabashedly celebrating its triumphs" more than ever before.[41] It was this perception that led Hubert Védrine, French foreign minister from 1997–2002, to coin the phrase "hyper-power" in reference to the United States. In the 1990s, Vedrine believed that U.S. strength had exceeded that of a superpower and argued that America must be challenged and opposed when it acted unilaterally.[42] The French Prime Minister from 1997–2002, Lionel Jospin, similarly expressed his distaste with American global

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[41] Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000–2004," 109.
[42] Christopher Caldwell, "Vedrinism: France's Global Ambition," *Policy Review* 103 (2000): 1-12.

authoritarianism stating, "No one can accept that the United States can pass a law on a global scale... American laws apply in the United States. They do not apply in France."[43]

By the turn of the millennia, several French men and women believed that the United States was an oppressive hegemon in the world. One of the most commonly cited and influential is Emanuel Todd, author of *Après L'Empire*. In 2002, he commented that "a single threat to global instability weighs on the world today: America, which from a protector has become a predator."[44] Recent polling analysis has also reflected such a perception. Synthesizing twenty-first century French opinion surveys, Richard Kuisel concluded, "the French think of the U.S. as a domineering, self-interested nation that uses its inordinate power to establish global hegemony."[45] If resentment towards perceived American hegemony is at the root of French anti-Americanism today, recent political and military events may further intensify the dynamic.

According to Paul Hollander, signs of American military dominance arouse American resentment. "Nothing stimulates anti-Americanism more effectively than the display of American military power…on these occasions, well-worn anti-American stereotypes instantly re-emerge: the US as the arrogant, crude, insensitive, uncivilized bully; the cowboy nation with a cowboy leader; the greatest terror state; the great Satan; the greedy, profit hungry monster intent on trading the blood of its youth for oil."[46] In the

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[43] Lionel Jospin as cited in Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us," 109. In this statement, Jospin was referring to a the "Helms Burton and D'Amato Acts" passed by President Clinton in 1996. This law threatened sanctions against foreign corporations seeking investment in Iranian or Libyan petroleum industries.

[44] James W. Ceaser, *Public Interest*, 3.

[45] Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us?", 97.

[46] Paul Hollander, "Loving Peace & Detesting America," *National Review Journal,* 24 March 2003, 2.

context of the 2003 Iraq war, the United States is often perceived as a dangerous, power-hungry bully. For example, Niall Ferguson believes the anti-American response to American hegemony as an irrational, yet genuine component of European and French society. "Most European governments supported the American decision to overthrow Saddam. Most rational people in Europe and Iraq itself welcomed the fact that he was gone. Yet a great many of the same people complained that the United States had acted 'unilaterally'; that it, rather than Iraq, was the 'rogue nation.'"[47]

If the United States is indeed being perceived both rationally and irrationally as a unilateral, selfish, and hegemonic power in the world, anti-Americanism would seem to be a predictable reaction from French society. This is the logic of the Hegemonic Resentment perspective.

1.5 Class Struggle

American hegemony has also been understood to be a perpetuating force of globalization in recent years. Some scholars contend that anti-Americanism may be explained as part of a larger anti-globalization movement in France. Franco-American relations scholar Kristin Ross is one who argues that French anti-Americanism "is best understood not in culturalist, psychological, or affective terms, but in class terms."[48] She asserts that French anti-Americanism is part of a global social revolution, a leftist

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[47] Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 164.
[48] Andrew Ross and Kristin Ross, Eds., *Anti-Americanism,* (New York: New York University Press, 2004, 152.

revolution whose enemy is the international symbol of capitalism and globalization—the United States. This viewpoint will be referred to as the *Class Struggle* perspective.

Ross points out an important difference between the social histories of France and the United States. While each country had a "revolution" and established a democracy based on enlightenment principles at the end of the eighteenth century, "the French had a social revolution and the United States did not."[49] Unlike American history, claims Ross, French history is based on the coup d'état of the oppressed masses. The nation was founded by an insurrection that would be associated with the left, with Marxism, with the struggle against the *evil* forces of capitalism. Jean-Francois Revel similarly acknowledges that France has been distanced from the United States by its socialist history. He believes that historical anti-Americanism is not only part of the larger class struggle; it is part of the larger ideological struggle between socialism and liberal democracy. According to Revel, "the principal function of anti-Americanism has always been, and still is, to discredit liberalism by discrediting its supreme incarnation… to travesty the United States as a repressive, unjust, racist—even fascist—society was a way of proclaiming: look what happens when liberalism is implemented."[50]

By the end of the 1960s, argues Kristin Ross, the French anti-American class struggle began in earnest. As France approached the end of its colonial wars, the socialists rallied against the French war in Algeria and the American war in Vietnam. They had become the defenders of the third world, the anti-colonialists, the anti-

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[49] Ibid., 152.
[50] Jean-Francois Revel, *Anti-Americanism* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2003), 12.

imperialists. The United States was identified by socialists in France as the global colonial power. America had taken on this image not only because of its unilateral military operations, but also the "imposing mechanisms of trade, finance, and investment" that lay beneath American military conquest.[51] Ross explains that recent political events have only served to refresh the perception that the United States is an imperial power in pursuit of global economic domination: "What US aggression in Iraq in part serves to make newly perceptible is the fact that the system of economic relations covered under the rubric of imperialism has hardly changed at all in the past thirty years."[52]

Ross contends that even though France is one of the most globalized nations on earth, it has become the leader in the anti-globalization movement. Referring to anti-globalization demonstrations that surged through France in 2000, the French newspapers echoed this claim: "For the first time in a rich country," wrote *Le Monde*, "we are witnessing today a strike against globalization, a massive collective reaction against economic globalization and its consequences."[53] According to Ross and the Class Struggle perspective, France's socialist identity has led it to become anti-globalizationist, and in turn anti-American in modern times.

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[51] Ross, *Anti-Americanism*, 146.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 152.

1.6 Cultural Preservation

Another rationalization for the French anti-globalization movement in recent years is the *Cultural Preservation* perspective. According to this perspective, the French resent globalization not simply because they are altruistically engaged in a global class struggle, but because they fear that globalization will destroy their national identity. According to scholars such as Sophie Meunier, the French have become anti-globalizationist, and in turn anti-American, out of cultural self-defence.

In 1999, a French farmer named Jose Bové personified the anti-globalization movement in France by attacking a McDonald's franchise outside of Montpellier in the south of France. In a fury against multi-national corporations and American trade policies, Bové trashed the American fast-food restaurant. According to Sophie Meunier, McDonald's had come to embody American capitalist expansion in France and all the detriment it may have caused to the French identity. "McDonald's red and yellow ensign is the new version of America's Star-Spangled Banner, whose commercial hegemony threatens agriculture and whose cultural hegemony insidiously ruins alimentary behavior—sacred reflections of French identity."[54] Anti-globalizationists in France tend to argue that free-trade policies have been responsible for the downfall of many sectors in the French economy. Those that feel negatively affected by globalization, such as Jose Bové, tend to be protectionists of the French economy. But Sophie Meunier argues that French anti-globalization "isn't as much a debate of free trade versus protectionism, it's a question of 'Anglo-Saxon globalization' versus preservation of France's national and

[54] Ibid., 107.

cultural values."[55] The anti-globalizationists in France are therefore not only worried about their economy; they are concerned with the loss of their unique culture.

Sophie Meunier argues that French anti-globalizationists have become anti-American because they view globalization and its proponent, the World Trade Organization, to be synonymous with Americanization, both of which pose a threat to the French identity. "The WTO has been portrayed in France as a Trojan horse that forces on others the lowbrow uniformity of the American lifestyle—fast food, bad clothing, and even worse sitcoms. In contrast, the French cultural model is portrayed as "high" culture of philosophers, fine dining, and intellectual films."[56] Moreover, Meunier summarizes how the French often feel culturally invaded by America through globalization: French economic protectionism is challenged by American economic openness; French "high" culture is challenged by American "low" culture; French cuisine is challenged by American fast food; and the French language is challenged by American English. Since the rise of American hegemony, France has arguably struggled to maintain its identity under the pervasive American influence. Therefore, the latest anti-American trend in France may be explained as a culturally defensive reaction to globalization and its consequences.

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[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.

1.7 Grandeur Establishment

Several scholars have explained French anti-globalization and anti-Americanism not as a matter of cultural self-defence, but as the means by which France attempts to re-establish its "grandeur."[57] According to the *Grandeur Establishment* perspective, France has become anti-American in the twentieth century in order to ascertain global leadership and supremacy at the expense of America.

According to John J. Miller and Mark Molesky, the French have maintained a belief in their global superiority since the enlightenment, a belief that "because France was once a powerful nation, it should always be a powerful nation."[58] Miller and Molesky describe France as a "hyper-nationalist" country that "continues to jockey for global supremacy much as they did 300 years ago."[59] If this contention is warranted, it is understandable how France may be resentful of the United States. French clout has steadily declined since the beginning of the nineteenth century while American power and influence has been inversely strengthened. France has been disappointed by its military failures from Napoleon to the French colonial wars. And to make their defeat more disconcerting, the French have had to rely on American military relief several times in the twentieth century.[60] If the French are indeed a hyper-nationalist nation seeking

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[57] "Grandeur" may be defined as France's eighteenth century ideal of greatness and supremacy
[58] Miller and Molesky, *National Review*, 47.
[59] Ibid.
[60] The French were essentially rescued by the Americans and other western allies in both World Wars. The French also demanded American help in Indochina and pried monetary concessions from the Americans from 1950–1954. Much to French dismay, the American aid and help did not come in enough time or quantity and the French were forced to withdraw from Indochina. It is also understood that French security and sovereignty greatly depended on American military protection from the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

global supremacy, they would have certainly lost some pride at the expense of the American hegemon.

In global politics, France has arguably attempted to re-establish its pride and grandeur by challenging and opposing America. In the 1960s, Charles de Gaulle and the Fifth Republic engaged France in the "politique du grandeur" by championing a political "third way" for France and the rest of the world.[61] Under de Gaulle, France challenged American authority by disengaging from NATO and developing its own nuclear weapons program in the heat of the Cold War. Since the reign of de Gaulle, France has also attempted to make itself a superpower through European federalism. According to French scholar Irwin Wall, European federalism is the only realistic way that France can challenge American hegemony in modern times. As a comparative example, Wall explains how the defence policies of Europe's three largest military powers differ today: The British want to turn Europe into the junior sidekick of the United States, the Germans want to make Europe into "a Switzerland," and the French desire a European superpower to challenge U.S. hegemony.[62] Wall further demonstrates his claim with polling statistics: In 2004, 91% of French people polled expressed a desire to make the European Union into a superpower equal to the United States, whereas 61% of other Europeans said the same.[63] According to Wall's observations, one may contend that little has changed to the

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[61] For more on Charles de Gaulle's "politics of grandeur" see: Maurice Vaisse, *La grandeur: Politique etrangere du General de Gaulle, 1958-1969,* (Paris: Librairie Artheme Fayard, 1998).
[62] Irwin M. Wall, "The French-American War Over Iraq." *The Brown Journal of World Affairs, 10,* 2 (2004): 123–139.
[63] Ibid., 124.

French notion of "politique du grandeur" since the 1960s. France challenged and opposed America to assert its own power then, and it appears to act similarly today.

Another way that France has challenged America and inflated its stature on the international scene is through the United Nations. With a permanent seat on the Security Council, France is disproportionately over-represented at the U.N.[64] The French have arguably used their enormous diplomatic leverage to establish a position that is independently French, and quite often anti-American. According to Niall Ferguson, the U.N. provides "a stage on which the former empires can indulge in their own sense of self importance."[65] The French have been accused, particularly in recent years, of thwarting U.S. diplomacy at the United Nations to project their power on the world stage. It appears that they are quite comfortable using their diplomatic leverage against Washington if it serves to increase their power. As a former aid to Jacques Chirac has noted, "[French] foreign policy is based on the only trump that is left to us: the seat at the Security Council."[66] The *Grandeur Establishment* perspective offers a unique understanding that French anti-Americanism is created and used for France's global aspirations. If one considers French grandeur ideology, everything from France's veto of

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[64] Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 135. France no longer comes within reach of the economic and military might of the world's five largest powers.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Christopher Caldwell, "Chirac's Grand Ambition: France's bid to lead the rest of the world against America," *The Weekly Standard*, 7 April 2003, 29.

the 2003 U.N. mandate for military intervention in Iraq to its posture of anti-globalization may be explained as French attempts to establish grandeur in the current world order. [67]

1.8 Scapegoating and Political Exploitation

Some scholars contend that French leaders not only employ anti-Americanism to establish French grandeur, they also use the phenomenon for self-serving political objectives. According to the *Scapegoating and Political Exploitation* perspective, French anti-Americanism prevails because France scapegoats America for its own failures. Such scapegoating is then exploited by French politicians as a way to attain popularity and distract the nation from their own political shortcomings.

The American hegemon makes an easy target for scapegoating as it maintains an all-encompassing influence in France. Jean-François Revel argues that French anti-Americanism "flourishes at the expense of self examination" and contends it is a convenient way for France to mask its own problems by trying to expose American plight. [68] "Here we see how the Americans are useful to us: to console us for our own failures, serving the myth that they do worse than we do, and that what goes badly with us is their fault. America is the scapegoat, made to bear all the sins of the world."[69] Similarly, Paul Hollander argues that anti-Americanism is a comprehensive way for

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[67] Sophie Meunier, "The French Exception," *Foreign Affairs, 79*, 4 (2000), 106. Sophie Meunier argues that France has sought to regain its pride through a firm stance against globalization and America in the twentieth century. Even though France appears to be an altruistic "advocate of the third world", Meunier contends that through a posture of anti-globalization, France has appeared to be a world leader and has greatly increased its prestige among countries opposed to U.S. trade policies.
[68] Jean-Francois Revel, *Anti-Americanism*, 170.
[69] Ibid.

nations such as France to disregard their own failures by blaming the United States for matters in which America has become a symbol.

> Anti-Americanism encompasses a great variety of attitudes, beliefs, and circumstances. It may arise out of nationalism, anti-Western sentiment, anti-capitalism, the rejection of science, technology, and urban life, fear of nuclear war, general disgust with modernity, the defence of traditional ways of life, and the cultural condescension of established elites. Whatever its origins it tends to acquire an irrational dynamic of its own that springs from the need of human beings to explain and reduce responsibility for the misfortunes in their lives.[70]

James W. Ceaser further notes that contradiction and irrationality do not inhibit American scapegoating. As an example, he suggests that the United States is constantly criticized for being too modern with its fast food and other staples of "tasteless" modern life. America is blamed for corrupting French society with unrelenting modernity. Simultaneously, however, the United States is often criticized for not being modern enough. For instance, Americans are perceived as being old-fashioned because they are "too religious."[71] The French condemn the American president for talking about God, morality, and "fundamentalist" Christian values.

Reinforcing French scapegoating of the United States, anti-Americanism is often exploited by French politicians for political motivation. Certain scholars, such as James W. Ceaser, suggest that government exploitation has helped anti-Americanism to flourish in French society as of late.

> Such practical concerns as alliances, the personal ties and contacts forged with American officials, commercial relations, and a fear of communism worked to dampen anti-Americanism. But of late, European leaders have

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[70] Paul Hollander, *National Review Journal*, 410.
[71] James W. Ceaser, *Public Interest*, 18.

> been tempted to use anti-Americanism as an easy way to court favor with parts of the public, especially with intellectual and media elites. This has unfortunately added a new level of legitimacy to the anti-American mindset.[72]

The former French government, under Jacques Chirac, provided an example of such political exploitation. It may be argued that the Chirac government exploited anti-Americanism for two main reasons: to seek popularity and to distract the French from government wrongdoing. This idea will be explored in the following.

American writer Christopher Caldwell suggests that anti-Americanism was exploited under the Jacques Chirac government as a popularity tool.[73] He believes that Chirac may have sincerely disagreed with the United States war in Iraq, but after establishing his position, relished an opportunity to become the leading voice against the American hegemon. The 2003 anti-War protests brought together three major groups in France: Arabs, Communists, and anti-globalizationists all of which united in being anti-American. Chirac appealed favourably to these groups, particularly the Arab-French residents who account for roughly 10% of the French population. Caldwell describes an 80,000-strong anti-American Arab-Muslim crowd that gathered a night before the U.S. bombing encouraging their government's anti-American stance in Iraq by chanting: *"Le Napalm! Ce n'était pas Saddam! Ce n'était pas l'Islam! C'est l'Oncle Sam!"*[74] Opposing the U.S.-led war in Iraq created a common ground between the French government and the poor Arab-Muslim minority. In this way, Chirac won favours from a large element of

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[72] James W. Ceaser, *Public Interest*, 17.
[73] Christopher Caldwell, "Hating 'l'Oncle Sam': France unites in opposition to America," *The Weekly Standard*, 31 March 2003, 28.
[74] Ibid. Translated: "The Napalm! It wasn't Saddam! It wasn't Islam! It's Uncle Sam!"

his anti-American populous. Chirac's anti-Iraq war popularity also spread beyond his borders. He was greatly admired in the Arab world, and elements of the European population revered him. In 2003, the German Newspaper *Der Spiegel* declared him "the Kaiser of Europe."[75] Caldwell argues that Chirac was very aware of the anti-American elements of French, European, and global societies. He appealed to anti-Americans by going out of his way to appear anti-American.

Caldwell also notes that anti-Americanism has been a useful diversion from French government failures. In February 2003, for example, the French unemployment rate had risen by 0.8%—the third consecutive monthly leap.[76] The government had done nothing to improve this crisis and was in danger of harsh scrutiny. In addition, Chirac had promised massive tax cuts in his presidential campaign—"a 30-percent tax reduction over the next five years."[77] By 2003, however, the first 5% had been given and the government found itself out of money. They were unable to fulfill their promise. Caldwell argues that Chirac was able to divert anger away from the 2003 government failures, and instead reach unprecedented popularity by appealing to the anti-American elements in his country through his staunch resistance to the Iraq war.

The Chirac government was not the only political movement in France to exploit anti-Americanism, but it provides a compelling example in recent history. Many of the other French political parties express an element of anti-Americanism, and may even attract French voters through their anti-American perspectives. (See Appendix 1-1 for a

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[75] Christopher Caldwell, "Chirac's Grand Ambition," 29.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.

break down of French political parties, their political views, and their likely anti-Americanisms). The *Scapegoating and Political Exploitation* perspective puts forward a compelling argument that anti-Americanism exists because of American scapegoating, and is further reinforced by French political exploitation.

The preceding discussion of scholarly perspectives demonstrates that anti-Americanism in France is a complex topic with a great variety of explanation. According to the literature presented in this chapter, anti-Americanism has been explained as an elite-driven phenomenon; a side effect of political quarrelling and rivalry between France and America; a resentment of American hegemony, American-led globalization, and America's pervasive culture; and a result of French scapegoating and political exploitation.

Now that French anti-Americanism has been introduced and explored by these eight scholarly rationalizations, this thesis will shift to evaluate French public opinion. In doing so, the following chapters will more accurately determine how the French perceive America, why the French retain anti-American sentiment, and which of the theoretical perspectives discussed in this chapter prove to be probable explanation for French anti-Americanism.

CHAPTER 2:

What Do the French Think of America?

While it is important to explore the complexity of French anti-Americanism through a discussion of theoretical perspectives, this thesis posits that French anti-Americanism will be understood more accurately through an analysis of French opinion. This thesis advocates that if one can determine *how* the French perceive America, one will accurately establish *why* the French resent America. Accordingly, the remainder of this thesis will focus on evidence that evaluates what the French think of America.

To begin a larger investigation into how the French perceive America, this chapter will examine the research and theories of Richard Kuisel. As the only scholar to evaluate the American image in France with explicit evidence of French opinion, Kuisel's scholarship provides an appropriate reference point to the investigation of this thesis. This chapter will first discuss what Kuisel discovered in his principal research period, 2000-2004. Then, this chapter will explore the evidence and theory surrounding Kuisel's innovative premise that the American image began to rapidly deteriorate during the 1990s. After the scholarship of Richard Kuisel has been surveyed, this chapter will explain how further research into French opinion is needed to explore the suspected evolution of French anti-Americanism during the post-Cold War era.

2.1 French Opinion of America, 2000-2004

In his article "What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000–2004," Richard Kuisel surveyed a wide range of polling data to

determine how the French perceive the United States. Focusing on the years from 2000 to 2004, Kuisel investigated the image of America in France among four themes: the general reputation of Americans and the United States; the United States as an international power, leader and influence; America as a social and economic model; and American popular culture.[1] In his principal research period, 2000–2004, Kuisel made some important observations. His findings in each of the four categories will be discussed in the following.

In regards to the general reputation of the United States and Americans between 2000 and 2004, Kuisel found that the French commonly liked America, but resented American foreign policy. He discovered that the Iraq War tarnished the reputation of America,[2] but at the same time the French did not express outright hostility towards the United States. In the heat of Franco-American tensions over Iraq in 2003, for example, 70% of the French insisted that they liked Americans and only opposed the military intervention.[3] Beyond these observations, Kuisel also demonstrated that the general reputation of America worsened over the four-year period. He noted that favourable ratings of America were significantly worse in 2004 than they had been the years prior. Kuisel concluded: "If a majority of the French displayed a favorable perception of America during these years [2000–2004], their views were detached, checkered, unstable, and in sharp decline by 2003."[4]

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[1] Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us?", 92–93
[2] Ibid., 93–94. Kuisel references polling data that demonstrate a deteriorating American image after the Iraq war.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., 95

With regard to America's image as an international power, leader, and influence between 2000 and 2004, Kuisel demonstrated that "the French think of the US as a domineering, self-interested nation that uses its inordinate power to establish global hegemony."[5] In 2001, "four out of five Frenchmen and women…believed that the U.S. did not generally consider the views of other countries and acted only in its self interest."[6] Other data in the 2000–2004 period revealed that America was judged as a "domineering" nation.[7] "Asked to describe their dislike for American influence, respondents from one poll mentioned: 'seizing control of other countries', 'acting as world policemen', 'imposing their lifestyle', 'American imperialism', and 'economic hegemony.'"[8] The French also accused the United States of practicing unfair trade.[9] Along with these negative perceptions of America, Kuisel revealed that the French desired to counter and oppose American hegemony. One poll demonstrated that France, more than any other European nation, aspired to turn the European Union into a superpower to rival American hegemony.[10] Overall, Kuisel concluded that the image of America as an international power, leader and influence was overwhelmingly negative between 2000 and 2004.

In regards to America's image as a social and economic model between 2000 and 2004, Kuisel found that the French sternly rejected American society along with its socio-economic model. In this four-year period, French respondents generally described

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[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid., 96

American society as one marked by "a will to dominate, materialism, violence, and racism".[11] The French criticized American society "most frequently for failing to provide social protection or a good education, for fighting crime, and integrating immigrants."[12] Beyond negative criticisms of American society, the French also had generally negative opinions of America as a socio-economic model. Kuisel observed that four out of five French respondents denied that American society, style of life, and culture should be a model for them, and only slightly fewer said the same about America's economic system.[13] Furthermore, the French professed to have different values than Americans. Between 2000 and 2004, French respondents criticized American societal values as being too individualistic and "too religious."[14] Kuisel also demonstrated, however, that America's image as a social and economic model was not entirely negative. For example, one poll demonstrated that America was generally regarded as a "democracy that is friendly and trustworthy."[15] Nevertheless, this finding seems to be an exception to the majority of polling opinion between 2000 and 2004 that revealed negative French perceptions of American society and its socio-economic model.

With regard to the image of American popular culture in France between 2000 and 2004, Kuisel found that French opinion was largely ambivalent. In 2003, "one survey demonstrated that two-thirds of the French—similar to other West Europeans, declare

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[11] Ibid., 98
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid., 97–98
[14] Ibid., 99
[15] Ibid.

they 'like', rather than 'dislike' American [cultural] imports."[16] At the same time however, "the polls [revealed] that among West European populations, the French have tended to record the lowest favorable opinion of American culture."[17] Even though the French consume vast quantities of American cultural imports,[18] Kuisel found that most French rated certain aspects of American culture to be "excessive" within France.[19] While a majority of respondents agreed in one poll that the spread of "American ideas and customs" is "bad," another survey revealed that only one-third of the French regarded American culture to be a "serious" or "very serious" threat to French culture.[20] Kuisel concluded that while the image of American popular culture is not flattering in the twenty-first century, it has not hampered the mass consumption of American cultural imports.[21] Therefore, "compared to the issues posed by U.S. foreign policy or [the American] social model, the French public's ambivalence about American popular culture makes the latter a minor irritant for most of the population."[22]

In sum, Kuisel's findings between 2000 and 2004 offer a more detailed understanding about the ways in which France perceives America. Kuisel's evidence demonstrates that during these years the image of America generally worsened. Moreover, his findings reveal that the French mainly resent America because of its hegemonic posture in foreign affairs and its poor social and economic model. These

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[16] Ibid., 100
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid. As an example of French consumption of American culture, Kuisel notes that "in the summer of 2000, three-quarters of the movies shown in Paris were, so to speak, made in Hollywood."
[19] Ibid. In 2000, majorities regarded the volume of American television and film as "excessive."
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid., 101
[22] Ibid.

observations have some important implications for understanding French anti-Americanism in the twenty-first century.

The visible deterioration of America's image, particularly in terms of American foreign policy, suggests that anti-Americanism has become more pronounced in France because of the crisis in Franco-American relations. Furthermore, the negative image of America as a society and culture suggests that the French retain antipathy towards America that is deep-rooted and unrelated to the crisis in Franco-American relations. At this juncture, this thesis will not attempt to explain how the image of America in France supports certain scholarly perspectives of anti-Americanism; such a discussion will take place later in the thesis. For the time being, this thesis acknowledges that researching the image of America in France with evidence, as Kuisel has from 2000–2004, greatly aids in determining why the French express anti-Americanism.

Richard Kuisel's research findings from 2000–2004 also raise some important questions about the image of America over time: Is the negative image of America between 2000 and 2004 unique to that period? If the image of America worsened between 2000 and 2004, could it have been worsening in the years prior? Kuisel attempted to answer such questions by looking at trends in the American image from the 1980s to the twenty-first century. Even though his trends analysis of the American image was brief and secondary to his research period, Kuisel was able to shed some light on the American image in France before the twenty-first century. His research on the image of America in France during the post-Cold War period will be discussed in the following section.

2.2 French Opinion of America, 1980s-2000

After evaluating the image of America between 2000 and 2004 in his article "What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000–2004," Richard Kuisel posed the question "How do [French] perceptions of [2000–2004] correspond to those of the recent past?"[23] Briefly analyzing polling data from the 1980s up to his period of research, Kuisel made some significant observations.

Kuisel found that in retrospect, the mid to late 1980s represented a period of relative pro-Americanism.[24] In these years, a large minority of the French actually considered themselves "pro-American," "few found US engagement in Europe excessive," and "majorities thought America set a good example for political institutions, the media, and free enterprise."[25] In the 1990s, however, the image of America appeared to be much less positive. During this decade, one survey demonstrated an overall decline in "sympathy" for the United States while other polling data suggested that perceptions of American society and culture were becoming more negative.[26] Another survey conducted systematically between 1985 and 2004 demonstrated that French feelings of favourability and confidence towards the United States declined over the period. Kuisel explained that between 1985 and 2001, favourable perceptions of the United States were around 60 to 65%. Moreover, about 50% of the French population during these years had confidence in the United States to deal responsibly with world problems. "But in 2001, French

[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.

opinion on both counts collapsed."[27] In a summary of his polling trends analysis, Kuisel concluded that in France, "the shift towards a more critical stance [against the U.S.] then occurred during the 1990s. The most recent years, [2000–2004], only etched this image more deeply."[28]

Richard Kuisel's conclusion that the American image in France worsened primarily in the 1990s is an important and relatively overlooked premise in the study of French anti-Americanism. It is widely understood that French aversion towards America intensified during the twenty-first century crisis in Franco-American relations. However, the idea that America's image deteriorated in France during the 1990s is rarely discussed in the literature on French anti-Americanism. Kuisel's observations of the American image in France before the twenty-first century therefore contribute some new and important questions to the scholarly discourse on French anti-Americanism: Could it be that the image of America in France was negative and worsening *before* the recent crisis in Franco-American relations? If so, why might the French be increasingly negative towards America in the 1990s? Would such a trend imply that French anti-Americanism became more prevalent and severe in the post-Cold War era? At present, Kuisel provides the best answers to these questions.

In his most recent article, "What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000-2004," Kuisel was rather brief in his evidence and

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[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid., 102

analysis of the 1990s American image in France.[29] However, in a previous article, "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again: The Paradox of French Anti-Americanism," Kuisel provided some rationalization for changes in French anti-Americanism during the 1990s. Through his observations of the post-Cold War period, he hypothesized that anti-Americanism had become increasingly severe as France struggled to maintain its identity in the face of globalization, American hegemony, and America's socio-economic influence. Kuisel's theory of post-Cold War French anti-Americanism will be discussed below as the pre-eminent explanation for the deterioration of America's image in France during the 1990s.

According to Kuisel, a large portion of the French came to resent globalization after the Cold War, particularly when it seemed to be forced upon them.[30] In many sectors of the economy, France felt pressure to concede to American economic demands. Furthermore, France has been unwillingly matched against the United States economy in a "zero sum game in which American gains are French losses."[31] Kuisel argues that the forced openness of the French economy and corresponding foreign investment has seemingly threatened the very idea of "Frenchness." The traditional dynamics of French society—a homogenous population, the family farm, Catholicism, a hexagon surrounded by boundaries, and a national language and culture—have all been challenged by modern

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[29] Indeed only a fraction of his article *"What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000-2004"* was spent looking at data before the twenty-first century. In his "trends" section Kuisel touched on some polling data for the 1980s and the 1990s. This section was less than 2 pages out of his 29 page article. See: p. 101–102 of that article.

[30] The European Union, foreign investment, and global commerce are all examples of the foreign pressures of globalization that are beyond French control. Richard Kuisel. "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again: The Paradox of French Anti-Americanism." *French Politics, Culture and Society,* 19: 2001, 7.

[31] Richard Kuisel, "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again," 7.

Americanization.[32] With its unstoppable, aggressively promoted consumer culture—fast food, music, clothing, and so on—America has arguably become "unbearable" to the French.[33] According to Kuisel, the rise of globalization after the Cold War has therefore caused the anti-globalizationists, anti-capitalists, xenophobes, and cultural protectionists to join together in anti-Americanism.

Kuisel also argues that America's intensified hegemonic and unilateral posture after the Cold War contributed to intensified French anti-Americanism. In the 1990s, American political power was perceived as a threat to French political autonomy.

> Transatlantic relations became testy soon after the end of the Cold War when the image of the U.S. began to turn threatening. There were differences over reform of NATO, construction of the EU, and selection of leaders to international organizations; quarrels over trade, especially agriculture and culture; disagreements over the Balkans, the Middle East and Africa; and tension over strategies for dealing with 'rogue states'. Such disputes were hardly new, but the post Cold War context was. The US seemed to be acting more and more as an unrestrained superpower....whatever the issue, in the mid- to late 1990s, the US always seemed to impose its will.[34]

After the Cold War, Kuisel argues that America became a greater political obstacle to France than ever before. America's seemingly impenetrable power therefore deepened French resentment towards American hegemony and its unilateralism.[35]

The rise of globalization and American hegemony has also increased the influence of America's "flawed" social model and culture in France. This dynamic has

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[32] Richard Kuisel, "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again," 8. The "hexagon" referred to here is France. Geographically, France resembles the shape of a hexagon.
[33] Richard Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us?", 109.
[34] Richard Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us?", 110.
[35] Immanuel Todd as cited in James W. Ceaser, "A Geneology of Anti-Americanism." According to French intellectual Immanuel Todd: "Only one threat to global stability hangs over the world today - the United States itself, which was once a protector and is now a predator."

arguably threatened French society and culture.[36] As discovered in Kuisel's polling analysis, the French dislike American society[37] and resent America's "threatening" cultural influence.[38] Consequently, the French challenge of adapting to the changing world order while maintaining French social and cultural values has created ambivalence and resentment.

> The French want to enjoy the advantages of EU and globalization, but they regret what they want—because it entails a sacrifice of "Frenchness"...this dilemma creates ambivalence because there is a sense of loss and powerlessness. And this ambivalence provokes some to direct their anxiety and resentment against the presumed champion and principal beneficiary of these changes, the United States. This is the principal cause of [post-Cold War] anti-Americanism.[39]

According to Kuisel, post-Cold War anti-Americanism may therefore be defined as a form of retaliation—"retaliation against a seemingly omnipotent United States which tries to impose the self-serving process of globalization on France; retaliation against [America's] obstructionist, expendable, and unreliable hegemony in international politics; and retaliation against American promotion of [its] flawed social model, which challenges the traditional construction of 'Frenchness'."[40]

Through his recent scholarship, Richard Kuisel has contributed significant insight into post-Cold War anti-Americanism in France. His polling trends analysis in "What Do

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[36] Richard Kuisel, "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again," 10. "[post-Cold War] anti-Americanism, then, accuses the United States of depriving the French of their right to choose their own way of life, what, for example, they want to eat or see."
[37] Richard Kuisel, "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again," 8. "The French charge Americans with lacking a sense of social solidarity—pointing to how [Americans] have shredded [their] safety net or failed, from their perspective, to integrate immigrants."
[38] Richard Kuisel "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again," 7. Kuisel lists the internet, fast food, the WTO, Hollywood, and American investment as cultural threats to France. He also notes that the French are likely outraged that "Disneyland Paris attracts more visitors than the Louvre or Notre Damme."
[39] Richard Kuisel, "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again," 8.
[40] Richard Kuisel, "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again," 9.

the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000–2004," revealed that the image of America in France likely deteriorated during the 1990s. Moreover, his explanation for post-Cold War French anti-Americanism in "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again: The Paradox of French Anti-Americanism," suggests that the phenomenon has become more prevalent due to the ascending influences of globalization, American hegemony, and America's social model in the 1990s. As the pre-eminent scholar to propose and explain a premise that anti-Americanism intensified in the 1990s, Kuisel's conclusions are important to consider. Nevertheless, this thesis suggests that post-Cold War French anti-Americanism should be examined in greater depth to provide a more complete explanation. The following section will explain how this thesis intends to use Kuisel's research as a reference point for further investigation into America's deteriorating image in France.

2.3 Investigating the Changes in French Opinion of America, 1990-2001

While Richard Kuisel's scholarship on post-Cold War French anti-Americanism is innovative, his investigation of the American image in France during this period is also insufficient. Kuisel formed his theory of post-Cold War French anti-Americanism several years before he conducted a polling analysis of French perceptions of America.[41]

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[41] Kuisel formed his theory of escalating 1990s anti-Americanism in a 2001 article entitled *"The Gallic Rooster Crows Again: The Paradox of French Anti-Americanism"*. In this article, Kuisel's theory was based on suspicions that anti-Americanism was getting worse after the Cold War because of new external pressures on France. It was a full 3 years later that Kuisel published an article examining polling data entitled "*What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000-2004*". In this article, Kuisel pointed to a few data that verified his prior suspicion that the image of America in France was likely deteriorating in the 1990s.

Consequently, when he hypothesized that the French resented America more in the 1990s due to the escalating influences of globalization, American hegemony, and America's social model, he did not have substantial evidence to demonstrate how the French actually perceived America during these years. Furthermore, even when Kuisel conducted a polling assessment of French perceptions of America, his research on the 1990s was limited to a few polling data relating to trends in the American image over time. As a result, in a 29-page article analyzing the image of America in France, only a single page was spent substantiating America's image in France during the 1990s.[42] Considering Kuisel's polling research focused on the years 2000-2004, his absence of in-depth research in the 1990s is understandable. Nevertheless, this thesis advocates that more evidence is needed to confirm Kuisel's hypothesis that the American image in France conspicuously worsened during the 1990s.

Acknowledging the paucity of serious scholarship on post-Cold War French anti-Americanism, this thesis will further investigate two of Kuisel's important and understudied premises. First, that the American image in France was negative and deteriorating during the 1990s. Second, that French anti-Americanism worsened during this decade because of a French retaliation against the overwhelming forces of globalization, American hegemony, and the U.S. socio-economic model. Chapters Three and Four will explore the image of America in France during the 1990s in two ways:

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[42] In his article, "*What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000-2004,*" Kuisel referenced a few polling data from the 1980s and the 1990s in a section labelled "Trends." See: pp. 101–102.

through more detailed analysis of polling data over the period and through a survey of leading French periodical opinion articles in the 1990s.

To re-examine and elaborate upon Kuisel's polling analysis, this thesis will analyze a wider range of French opinion surveys.[43] All of the polls examined in this thesis have been conducted by professional polling agencies that practice a random sampling methodology. Accordingly, the polling data will accurately measure general or mass French opinion of America. While some may argue that polling data is not a reliable indicator of French opinion,[44] this thesis posits, as does Kuisel, that "polls are as accurate an index of public opinion as other sources, such as newspapers, bestsellers, internet chat rooms, interviews, or debates among media-intellectuals. Thousands of people who are systematically interrogated by numerous professional polling agencies offer solid evidence of attitudes."[45] In order to investigate how the French perceived America during the post-Cold War era, most of the polling data discussed in this thesis is limited to this period. However, to also provide a temporal context to the 1990s, thereby determining if the image of America was deteriorating in France before, during, or after the post-Cold War era, some polling data will be analyzed from the years preceding and following the 1990s.

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[43] The most relevant polling data was collected from the following polling agencies: Gallup, United States Information Agency, Sofres, PIPA. Also, *Le Monde* also published some polling data that will be used in the analysis.

[44] Richard Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us?", 92. According to Kuisel, criticisms of polling data's reliability include: "The wording or order of questions can shape response, and it is difficult to distinguish between causal answers and deeply held attitudes. Moreover, respondents often select from a prepared menu of choices and rarely have the opportunity to offer alternatives or explain their selection."

[45] Ibid., 92.

Complementing the polling analysis, this thesis will seek to more accurately and comprehensively investigate French perceptions of America during the post-Cold War era by surveying French editorial and opinion articles. Spanning the 1990 to 2001 period, this thesis will discuss articles collected from the six most widely circulated news magazines in France.[46] Most of the editorials in the news magazines are written by French intellectuals for an intellectual audience.[47] Thus, the periodical opinion analysis may accurately portray intellectual French opinion as opposed to mass French opinion represented in the polls. Moreover, three of the periodicals—*Le Monde Diplomatique, Le Nouvel Observateur,* and *Liberation*—represent a left political bias and three of the periodical sources—*Le Figaro, Le Point,* and *L'Express*—represent a right political bias. Thus, on occasion, the periodical opinion research may aid in distinguishing left-wing French perceptions from right-wing French perceptions, thereby adding more insight into the general French opinion represented in the polls. In all, the periodical opinion research will complement the polling research by determining not only if the French retained negative perceptions of America during the post-Cold War era, but also why they judged America in a negative light.

Chapters Three and Four of this thesis will organize the polling and periodical opinion research findings by explaining the post-Cold War image of America in France according to five themes. This approach builds on Richard Kuisel's research framework

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[46] These are: *Le Monde Diplomatique, Le Nouvel Observateur, Liberation, Le Figaro, Le Point,* and *L'Express.*

[47] Evidence of this intellectual audience is demonstrated by statistics: "84% of 'les professions superieures' (i.e. 'elite' professions like lawyers and doctors) claim to follow the written press with interest." Source: James Cowan, "L'Image des Etats-Unis dans la Presse Francaise, 1990--1999," (Doctoral dissertation, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, 2000), *ProQuest Digital Dissertations* (AAT 9975263).

employed in "What Do the French Think of Us? The Deteriorating Image of the United States, 2000-2004." First, general trends concerning America's reputation in France over the last two decades will be revealed thorough polling analysis. After these general trends are established, the thesis will turn to explore four more specific aspects of the image of America in France. These remaining four themes are: America as an international power; America as an ally and influence in French political affairs; America as a social and economic model; and American popular culture and its influence in France. For all of these specific themes, the post-Cold War image of America in France will be explained first by the polling opinion evidence and then by the periodical opinion evidence. Within the polling analysis of each theme, the polling results will be summarized in isolation. However, in closing the periodical analysis of each theme, the polling and periodical evidence will be summarized together by their general conclusions, contradictions, implications, and capacity to answer the three central questions the thesis research is analyzing: 1) Was the image of America negative and worsening during the post-Cold War period? 2) If so, why might the image of America be negative and worsening? 3) What would changes in the image of America during this time imply about the nature of French anti-Americanism after the Cold War? Finally, the analysis will turn briefly to the scholarly perspectives discussed in the first chapter to determine which explanations of French anti-Americanism might prove to be more probable.

For the sake of organization, the general image and the first two more specific themes will be discussed in chapter three, and the last two themes will be discussed in Chapter Four. Through the methods of analysis presented above, this thesis will more

accurately conclude what may be the character and causes of French anti-Americanism in the post-Cold War era.

CHAPTER 3:

America's Image in France: Reputation, Power, and Politics

3.1 Trends in America's General Image and Reputation in France

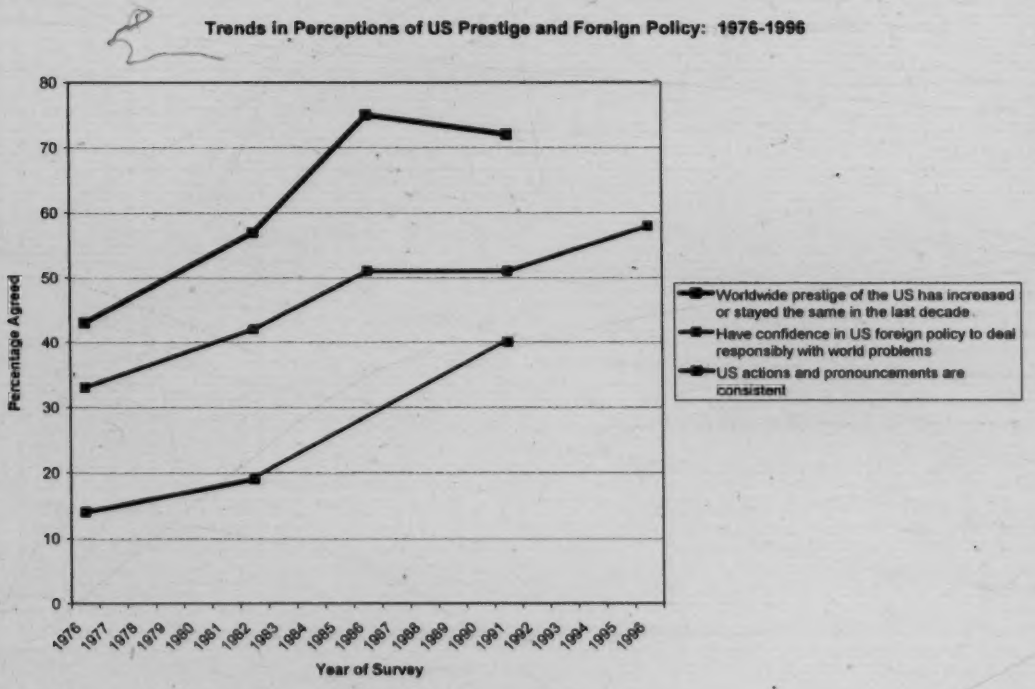
In order to determine trends in America's reputation from the late Cold War period to the twenty-first century, this section will focus its analysis solely on polling statistics spanning that period. In an attempt to quantify general sentiment towards the United States, survey questions that have measured American *prestige* or French feelings of *favourability* and *sympathy* towards the United States will be used for analysis. Furthermore, this section will discuss one survey that gave respondents the opportunity to choose their own adjectives in describing America. When these various survey approaches are taken together over time, a better understanding of America's general image and reputation among the French population begins to emerge.

Between 1976 and 1991 one poll asked respondents to rate whether they believed the worldwide prestige of the United States had increased, decreased, or stayed the same over the last decade [see figure 3-1].[1] Between 1976 and 1986, percentages of those who believed that U.S. prestige increased or stayed the same jumped from 43% to 75%. From 1986 to 1991, prestige levels declined slightly, but stayed above 70%. Even though this survey question was not asked again after 1991, it is relevant for the post-Cold War discussion because it provides a pre-1990s baseline for the general image of the United

[1] French American Foundation, "The Gallup/French American Foundation 1991 Image Study," (Conducted By *The Gallup Organization,* Marketing and Attitude Research, Princeton, New Jersey, February 1991), 23.

States. According to these ratings of prestige, it appears that the positive image of the U.S. was on the incline in the 1980s, and remained high until 1991.

Figure 3-1


Trends in Perceptions of US Prestige and Foreign Policy: 1976-1996
Percentage Agreed
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996
Year of Survey
Worldwide prestige of the US has increased or stayed the same in the last decade
Have confidence in US foreign policy to deal responsibly with world problems
US actions and pronouncements are consistent

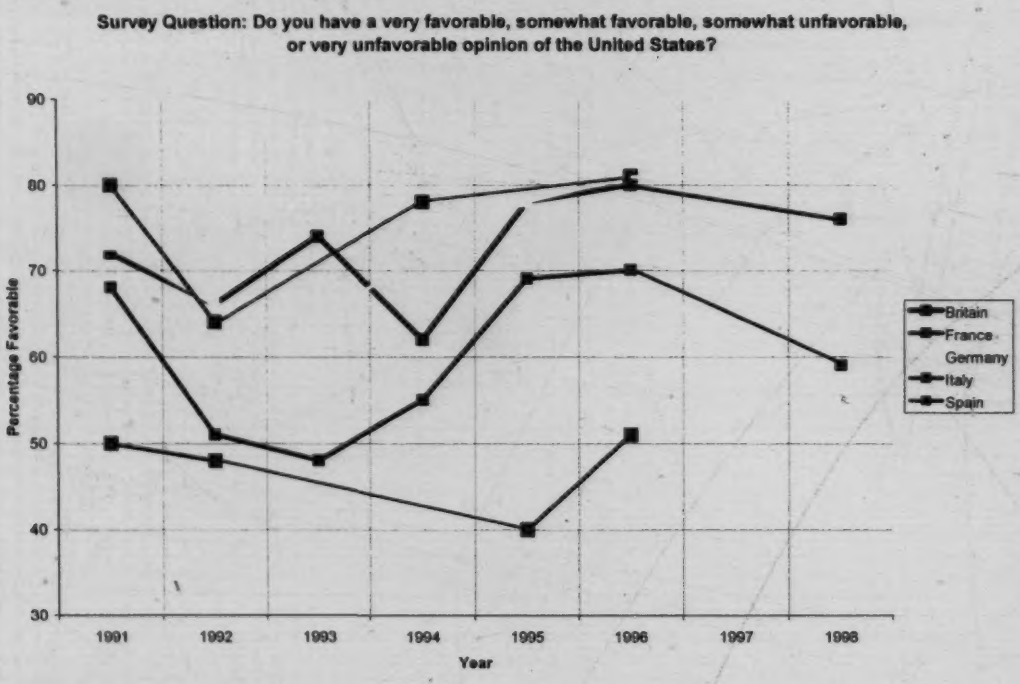
Source: Gallup & French American Foundation

One survey that directly measured general French sentiment towards America in the 1990s annually asked respondents to rate the degree of favourability they felt towards the United States between 1991 and 1998 [see figure 3-2].[2] In 1991, a majority of the French (nearly 70%) had a favourable view of America. Between 1991 and 1995,

[2] U.S. Department of State, Office of Research, *Key West Europeans Mostly Negative,* May 2003, Figures 4 and 5. Question: "Do you have a favourable, somewhat favourable, somewhat unfavourable, or unfavourable opinion of the United States?"

however, favourability ratings dropped by nearly 20%, to the point where a minority of respondents held a favourable view of the United States in 1993. After 1995, favourability ratings rose back to 1991 levels. This trend in France was fairly consistent with other European nations at the time.[3] The findings of the favourability survey suggest that the general reputation of the United States declined and became more negative in the early 1990s, particularly between 1991 and 1995.

Figure 3-2



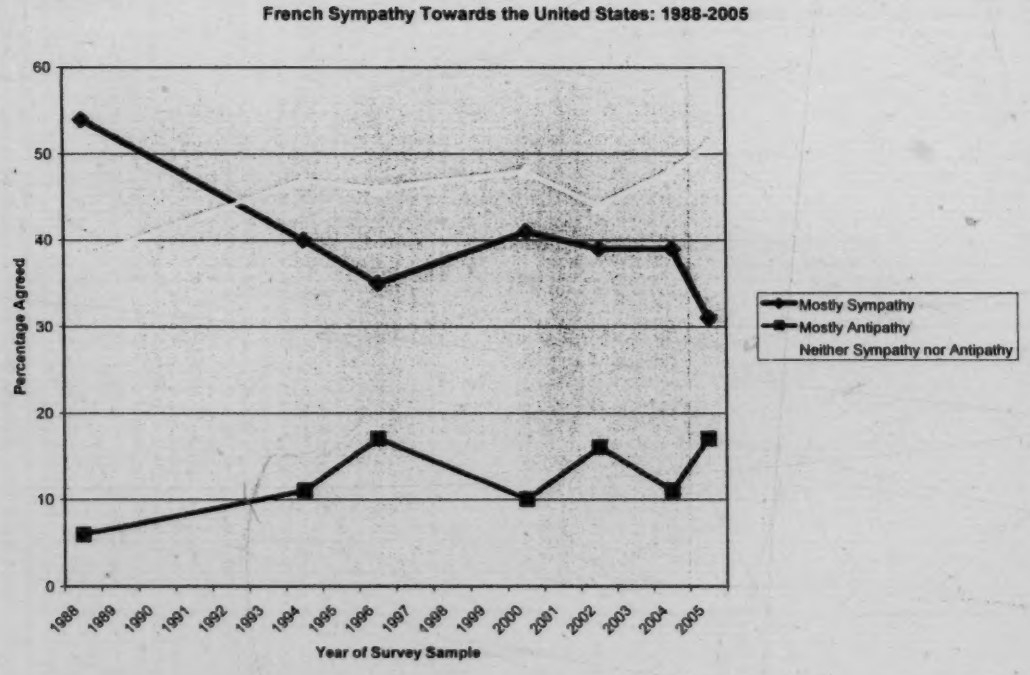
Source: U.S. Department of State[4]

[3] See figure 3-2 for favourability recordings from other European nations.
[4] In this figure, "percentage favourable" refers to the total percent of those who responded "very favourable" or "somewhat favourable" to the survey question.

Along the lines of the preceding survey, a Sofres survey collected data regarding general French sentiment towards the United States by measuring sympathy ratings over the last two decades [see figure 3-3].[5] When French respondents were asked whether they felt "mostly sympathy," "mostly antipathy," or "neither sympathy nor antipathy" for the United States, a similar picture to the favourability survey emerged. Overall, sympathy declined from a majority of 54% in 1988 to a minority of 35% in 1996, when it rebounded slightly but stayed low thereafter. Antipathy increased by over 10% between 1988 and 1996, though it never exceeded 20% at any time in the survey. Ambivalence towards the United States steadily increased over the years of the survey. Another significant observation is that between 2004 and 2005, sympathy ratings dramatically dropped as antipathy ratings dramatically increased. While the most recent tendency of 2004 to 2005 is too short to be labelled a *trend,* it is fair to say that this survey has shown an overall deterioration of the American reputation and an increase in negative sentiment towards the United States since 1988, and particularly between the years 1988 and 1996.

[5] The French American Foundation, "France-États-Unis: regards croisés," Conducted by TNS Sofres, June 2005. http://www.tns-sofres.com/etudes/pol/050705_regardsFrceUS_r.htm

Figure 3-3



Source: TNS Sofres & French American Foundation

Rather than have the French rate levels of prestige, favorability, or sympathy towards the United States, another survey asked respondents to choose their own adjectives to describe America [see figure 3-4].[6] Survey participants were given a list of the following adjectives: Generosity, Youthfulness, Lax Morals, Naivety, Liberty, Energy, Racism, Imperialism, Wealth, Inequality, Violence, and Power, and were asked, "In this list of words, which represents the United States the Most?" Distinct trends of certain variables may be shown during the 1990s and after the turn of the twenty-first century.

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[6] The French American Foundation, "France-États-Unis: regards croisés."

During the 1990s, the United States had come to be perceived as more of an imperial power that represented less liberty and more violence, inequality, and racism in its society. From 1988 to 2000, a significant decrease was seen in the variable of *Liberty*, while large increases were seen in the variables of *Imperialism*, *Violence*, *Inequality*, and *Racism*.[7] Lagging slightly behind the trend, the latter half of the 1990s also saw a rise in the characteristics of power and wealth representing the United States from 1996 to 2002.[8] Between 1988 and 2002, one may conclude that that the reputation of America started to deteriorate at the beginning of the 1990s and the perception of American hegemony started to increase after 1996.

Another interesting trend in this survey is demonstrated after the turn of the twenty-first century. Even though the perception of American *Imperialism* and *Naivety* continued to increase between 2000 and 2004, the general reputation of the U.S. also improved.[9] From 2000 to 2004, *Violence* dropped by a third, *Racism* dropped by nearly 20%, and *Imperialism* also declined.[10] Significant increases were also seen in characteristics of *Liberty* and *Youthfulness* during these years.[11] By 2004, perceptions of U.S. hegemony were still high, but the reputation of the United States seems to have recovered a fair amount after 2000. A final trend to emerge from the Sofres survey of adjectives is from the most recently recorded data. Between 2004 and 2005, a reversal of

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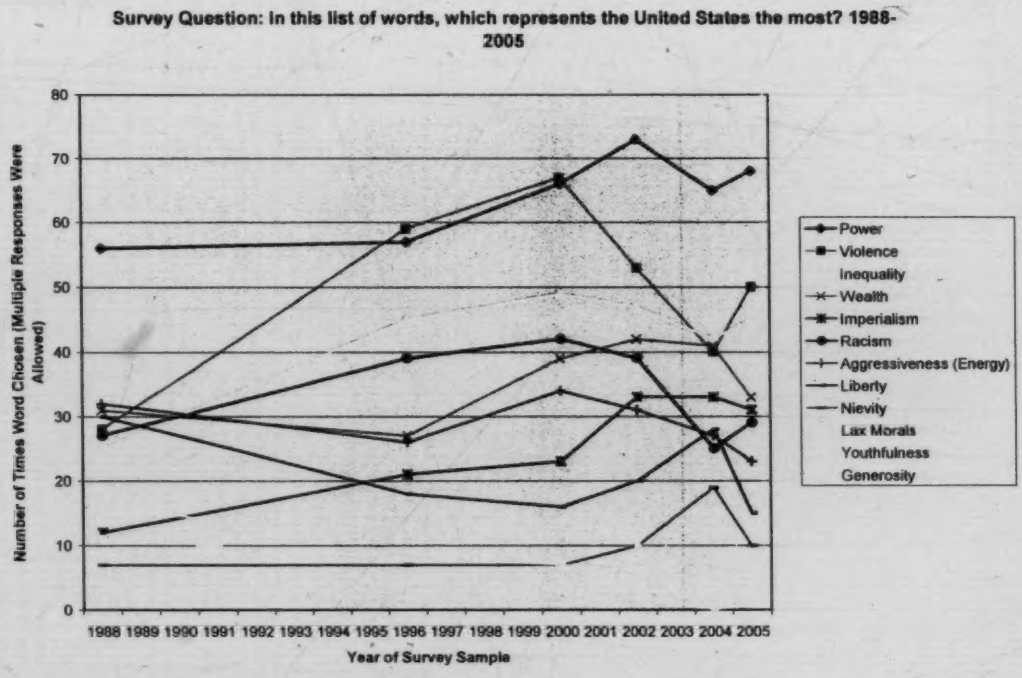
[7] 1988–2000: *Liberty* dropped from 30% to 16%; while *Imperialism* rose from 12% to 23%; *Violence* rose from 28% to 67%; *Inequality* rose from 25% to 49%; and *Racism* rose from 27% to 42%.
[8] From 1996 to 2002, *Power* increased from 57% to 73% and *Wealth* increased from 27% to 42%.
[9] *Imperialism* rose to above 30% and *Naivety* ratings more than doubled (7% to 19%)
[10] *Violence* dropped from 67% to 40%; *Racism* dropped from 42% to 25%; and *Inequality* fell from 49% to 42%.
[11] *Liberty* rose from 16% to 28% and *Youthfulness* rose from 7% to 17%.

the 2000 to 2004 trend took place. In this last data, Violence, Inequality, and Racism all increased while Liberty, Naivety, and Youthfulness all decreased.

Figure 3-4:



Source: TNS Sofres & French American Foundation

Polling Summary

By uncovering the trends of Prestige, Favourability, Sympathy, and other adjectives representing the United States from the 1980s to present, one may come to a conclusion about the general image and reputation of America in France. A synthesis of these surveys demonstrates that the U.S. reputation had improved throughout the 1980s to remain relatively favourable at the end of the Cold War, but then deteriorated

significantly afterward. After 1988, the image of America was in decline. In the first half of the 1990s, America had lost sympathy and favourable sentiment within France. In the early years of the decade, the U.S. became perceived more as an illiberal, violent, and racist nation marked by inequality. Towards the latter half of the 1990s, the U.S. recovered some favourable feelings and sympathy, but was continually labelled by the negative adjectives of the early 1990s. Also in the second half of the 1990s, America developed more of a reputation as a powerful, wealthy, and imperial power. This image of hegemony increased even more after 2000 and has not waned since. While the overall positive reputation of the U.S. deteriorated in the 1990s, part of the image appeared to recover between 2000 and 2004. By 2005, however, the image had deteriorated once again and the U.S. reputation was ultimately the same as it had been around 2000 and 2002.

The analysis of America's general reputation over the last two decades provides a valuable backdrop to investigating the image of America more specifically. As the results in this section were only obtained to observe the general trends in America's image since the late Cold-War period, the thesis will not attempt to explain why the image of America may have changed at this juncture; such a discussion will be provided in following sections. For the moment, it is important to simply acknowledge that the general polling research in this section largely supports Richard Kuisel's hypothesis and the first question this thesis aims to investigate: the general image of America in France appears to have worsened in the 1990s and maintained a downward tendency into the twenty-first century. To further understand if and why the American image was deteriorating in

France more accurately, the following sections will dissect America's image in France in more specific terms. Through such an analysis, the remaining thesis research will also elucidate why the general reputation of America may have been worsening in the 1990s and what changes in America's image may imply about the nature of French anti-Americanism after the Cold War.

3.2 America as an International Power: According to the Polls

Beginning a more complete and detailed investigation of America's image in France during the post-Cold War era, this section will examine more polling data to determine how the French have judged America in its role as an international power. Several polling surveys, conducted from the late-Cold War period up to the twenty-first century, add insight into this aspect of the American image. Overall, these polls demonstrate that French have ambivalent feelings regarding America's role in the world. Nevertheless, America's image as an international power also appears to be more negative after the Cold War.

As a pre-1990s context to the American image as an international power, one survey measured whether or not the French had confidence in the U.S. to truthfully act upon its pronouncements in foreign policy [see figure 3-1].[12] In 1976, only 14% of the French respondents believed that U.S. actions and pronouncements were consistent, and in 1982 only 19% believed the same. By 1990, however, 40% of those asked believed

[12] French American Foundation, "The Gallup/French American Foundation 1991 Image Study," 29–30. This survey was conducted in 1976, 1982, and 1990.

that U.S. actions and pronouncements were consistent. Even though a strong majority of the French did not demonstrate trust in the proclaimed intentions of American foreign policy during these years, their opinion of American foreign policy was progressively less critical.

Beyond measuring the consistency of American actions and pronouncements in its foreign policy, another survey asked the French to explain what they believed American foreign policy objectives were [see figure 3-5].[13] In surveys conducted between the years 1982 to 2005, respondents were asked "Which of the following statements best explain American foreign policy?" The options were "to protect and expand American business and investments in the world," "to maintain world peace," "to impose its will on the rest of the world," "to aid in the development of democracy in the world," and "to prevent the spread of communism." Several distinct trends may be demonstrated throughout the years of this survey. Between 1982 and 2000, "to protect and expand American investments in the world" rose dramatically from 25% to 40%. The trend continued upward to 2005 when the response reached 43%. Also following a rising trend over these years, "to impose its will on the rest of the world" rose steeply from 16% in 1991 to 39% in 2005. Inversely, between 1991 and 2005, "to maintain world peace" steadily declined from 29% to 10%, and "to aid in the development of democracy in the world" declined from 15% in 1991 to 7% in 2000, staying low thereafter. The response "to prevent the spread of communism" declined by half between 1982 and 1991 and was

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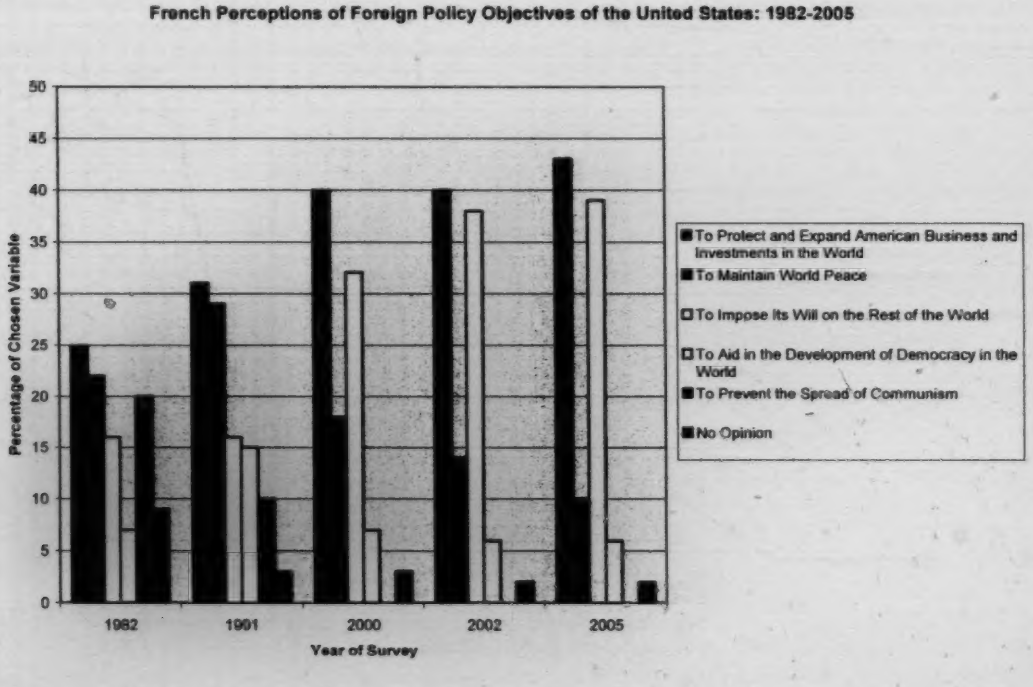
[13] Response percentages taken from two sources: French American Foundation, "The Gallup/French American Foundation 1991 Image Study," 31–33 for 1982 and 1991; French American Foundation, "France-États-Unis: regards croisés" for 2000, 2002, and 2005.

then rendered obsolete by the end of the Cold War. Although the discontinuation of this particular survey response may account for higher responses in the other categories after 1991, the data and its trends are significant. According to this survey, one may conclude that the mass French perception of U.S. foreign policy significantly changed between 1982 and 2005, and particularly after 1991. By 2000, it seems the U.S. had lost its image as a force for maintaining peace in the world. Instead, America was seen more as a selfish and imposing hegemonic power.

Figure 3-5:



Source: Gallup & French American Foundation; TNS Sofres

With regard to American foreign policy, the U.S. image appears to have deteriorated over the last two decades. Despite these changes, however, the masses have also held a high level of confidence in the United States as a world power. Between 1976 and 1996, one survey asked whether or not the French had confidence in the United States to exercise good judgment concerning world problems [see figure 3-1].[14] The data from this survey question demonstrates a trend of increasing confidence in the United States from 33% to 58% over those 20 years. Furthermore, other surveys have shown that the changing security environment in Europe before and after the Cold War has not challenged French confidence in the United States to aid them in crisis. In 1986, one survey asked respondents if they believed they could count on the United States in case of a conflict and 86% of respondents believed they could.[15] Similarly in 1998, when another survey asked the French whether they had confidence that the U.S. would assist them if their security was threatened, 78% believed the US would be there for France.[16]

Polling Summary

An analysis of the preceding polling data would suggest that the image of America as an international power was largely ambivalent, but also increasingly negative after the Cold War. The French perception of America's foreign policy objectives dramatically changed in the post-Cold War era as American international power was generally understood to be more hegemonic and self-serving than ever before.

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[14] French American Foundation, "The Gallup/French American Foundation 1991 Image Study," 28.
[15] French American Foundation, "The Gallup/French American Foundation 1991 Image Study," 36.
[16] "Seeking a New Balance: A Study of American and European Public Attitudes on Transatlantic Issues," (PIPA, June 1998), 14.

Nevertheless, a majority of the French also demonstrated confidence in the U.S. to handle global issues responsibly. The image of America as an international power and the apparent ambivalence of this image will be explained further by the analysis of French periodical opinion.

3.3 America as an International Power: According to Periodical Opinion

In many ways, the editorial opinions represented in French periodicals support the general trends found in the polling research. Almost unanimously, liberal and conservative French intellectuals perceived the United States to be an overbearing, hegemonic, and unilateral "hyperpower" after the Cold War. America was judged negatively for its economic, political, and military hegemony over France and the world.

During the 1990s, nearly every periodical surveyed identified French resentment of American economic hegemony. As early as 1992, *Le Monde Diplomatique* grumbled over America's new dominance in global oil markets. The Gulf War, argued the magazine, had merely allowed the United States to reinforce its power by ensuring the security of oil production and controlling petroleum prices in the Middle East.[17] When the French considered developing a common European currency in 1993, the editor of *L'Express* complained about the fact that "the possibility of a common currency goes against the wishes of those that hold power in the economic world today—the United States."[18] By 1996, a variety of French opinion again expressed discontent towards U.S.

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[17] Nicolas Sarkis, "Washington renforce son emprise sur la politique pétrolière," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, July 1992, 20.
[18] Yann de L'Ecotais, "Hiatus Européen," *L'Express*, 16 December 1993, 3.

foreign policy that appeared to strengthen America's economic dominance. Regarding President Bill Clinton's decision to impose sanctions on foreign companies seeking investment in Libyan and Iranian petroleum industries, French Foreign Minister Lionel Jospin protested: "No one can accept that the United States can pass a law on a global scale... American laws apply in the United States...they do not apply in France."[19] *Le Monde Diplomatique* echoed Jospin's sentiment, claiming that Clinton's policy went against the principles of both free trade and international rights.[20] Also, an editor of *Le Figaro*, Francois Lebrette, protested the American anti-terrorist sanctions, claiming that American foreign policy was having a negative effect on European oil companies. Lebrette complained that the "U.S. government alone seems to decide which countries are terrorist risks" and questioned "Why is the United States deciding the fate of companies from around the world?"[21]

By the end of the 1990s, French resentment in the face of American economic hegemony was still evident across a range of French periodicals. Commenting on globalization in 1999, Jean-Marie Rouart of *Le Figaro* complained about the expansion of U.S. multinationals and called the United States a "global economic dictator."[22] In the same year, the editor of *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Jean Daniel, commented on the "radical

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[19] Lionel Jospin as cited in Richard Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us?", 109. In this statement, Lionel Jospin was referring to a the "Helms Burton and D'Amato Acts" passed by President Clinton in 1996. This law threatened sanctions against foreign corporations seeking investment in Iranian or Libyan petroleum industries.

[20] Alain Gresh, "Croisade antiterroriste," *Le Monde Diplomatique,* September 1996, 1.

[21] François Lebrette, "Iran-Bosnie: Bill Clinton Joue un drôle de jeu," *Le Figaro,* 10 August 1996, 36–37.

[22] Jean-Marie Rouart, "Face à la dictature économique," *Le Figaro,* 16 December 1999, 2.

hegemony of the United States" which he termed the "American invasion."[23] In one article addressing concerns in Latin America, Daniel blamed American hegemony as the major source of the region's social and economic problems.[24] In another editorial that year, Daniel spoke optimistically of "balancing the devastating power of the United States" through an economic alliance between Latin America and Europe.[25] A year later, an editor of *Le Monde*, Francois Grosrichard, also railed against American economic hegemony. Referring to Franco-American trade disputes surrounding the PAC (common agricultural policy), Grosrichard believed the United States had "waged a war" on French farmers via the World Trade Organization. He believed that the French ought to fight back against the "standardization of American economic policies elsewhere in the world."[26] In all, the presented editorial opinion from left and right groups of French society demonstrates that America had taken on an image as a self-serving and domineering economic power after the Cold War.

During the 1990s, a diverse range of periodical opinion also demonstrates that America had been resented for its alleged self-serving political hegemony. As early as 1991, one commentator in *Le Monde Diplomatique* complained about America's reluctance to lose control of a "NATO under American hegemony."[27] A few months later, another writer for the same magazine, Paul-Marie de la Gorce, expressed his belief that the United States was not pursuing international democracy in its foreign policy, but

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[23] Jean Daniel, "Contre-jours mexicains," *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 25 March 1999, 26–27.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Jean Daniel, "L'énigme du serpent à plumes," *Le Nouvel Observateur,* 18 March 1999, 26–27.
[26] Francois Grosrichard, "La 'guerre' des paysans," *Le Monde,* 4 April 2000.
[27] Bernard Cassen, "Mais pour quelle Europe?" *Le Monde Diplomatique,* December 1991, 5.

instead was seeking to reinforce its hegemony.[28] De la Gorce claimed that the strategy of the Pentagon was to uphold America's superpower status achieved at the demise of the Soviet Union through a strong and dominant American military in Europe. In 1994, De la Gorce again commented on the political and military hegemony of the United States. He claimed that since the departure of George H. W. Bush, the Clinton administration had "one objective: maintaining [America's] position as 'the' superpower."[29] In his articles, De la Gorce was not altogether negative about American political and military hegemony. In light of the recent Cold War "Soviet threat," American hegemony was a preferred alternative for many in France—including De la Gorce. Nevertheless, his articles clearly represented a perception that American foreign policy had taken on a self-serving and domineering posture in the early 1990s.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, periodical opinion pages from the right and left of French society started to demonstrate growing resentment of American military hegemony. In 1999, Jean Daniel of *Le Nouvel Observateur* claimed that since the United States had no real economic or strategic interest in the Balkans, America only intervened there to "reassure NATO of its military supremacy."[30] In another editorial that year, Daniel called the American power "hegemonic in nearly every domain" and claimed that America "abuses this power regularly."[31] Also in 1999, Denis Jeambar of the magazine *L'Express* criticized the "democratic evangelism" of the United States. He believed that

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[28] Paul-Marie de la Gorce, "Comment préserver l'hégémonie? - Washington et la maîtrise du monde," *Le Monde Diplomatique,* April 1992, 1.
[29] Paul-Marie de la Gorce, "Le president Clinton et les contraintes de l'hégémonisme," March 1992, 12.
[30] Jean Daniel, "Le sens d'un combat," *Le Nouvel Observateur,* 22 April 1999, 24–25.
[31] Jean Daniel, "Mauvaise guerre, juste combat," *Le Nouvel Observateur,* 8 April 1999, 22–23.

America might have been abusing its democratic image to selfishly deceive other nations in persuit of its own political interests.[32] And in an article the following month, Jeambar called American presence in the Balkans a "new affirmation of American imperialism."[33] Two years later, Jean Daniel of *Le Nouvel Observateur* again complained of American political and military hegemony. He viewed the U.S. "war on terror" as a "crusade" against all that attempted to threaten the institutions of the "American hyperpower."[34] Later that year, Daniel wrote of the "autonomous" actions of the United States and protested how the entire world seemed to be under U.S. military surveillance.[35] He believed that "Americans [had] a planetary mission," which was to attain and maintain global hegemony.[36]

At the turn of the twenty-first century, periodical opinion pages from both the left and right in French society also expressed significant resentment towards the heightened unilateralism of the United States after the Cold War. Referring to the lack of American participation in the Kyoto protocol, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and the International Criminal Court, a commentator for *Le Figaro*, Jacques Beltran, criticized an American "propensity towards Unilateralism."[37] He believed that a new level of American "arrogance toward the international world" had begun in the 1990s with the

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[32] Denis Jeambar, "La loi de l'Oncle Sam," *L'Express*, 4 March 1999, 5.
[33] Denis Jeambar, "La France dans la guerre Un tandem exemplaire," *L'Express*, 15 April 1999, 56.
[34] Jean Daniel, "Etats-Unis: les Américains veulent être seuls," *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 29 November 2001, 24–25.
[35] Jean Daniel, "Bush, Sharon et Arafat," *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 20 December 2001, 26–27.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Jacques Beltran, "Leadership 'à la carte' des Etats-Unis," *Le Figaro*, 4 September 2001.

Clinton administration and carried over into the foreign policy of George W. Bush.[38] In the wake of September 11, Alain Lipietz of the magazine *Liberation* blamed the arrogance and unilateralism of American foreign policy for the tragedy. Referring to the same American unilateral actions as Beltran, Lipietz concluded that American indifference and conceit towards international solidarity is responsible for the hatred America had received in recent years.[39]

In reference to America's role as an international power, a large majority of editorials during the post-Cold War period demonstrated resentment towards U.S. unilateralism and America's economic, political, and military hegemony in the world. This sentiment is evident across six different periodicals throughout the 1990s. Nevertheless, as with the polling analysis, the periodical evidence also shows some contradictory sentiment. French opinion periodicals have not always passed negative judgment on U.S. foreign policy. At moments, French commentators have confidently encouraged the United States to solve global calamities. During the crisis in Somalia, for example, *Le Nouvel Observateur* respected America's capacity to intervene internationally and acknowledged the enormous role that America filled as the world's superpower.[40] And, in 2001, *Le Figaro* called on America to intervene in the international proliferation of nuclear weapons.[41] Specific editors who had been particularly judgmental towards American global hegemony, such as Denis Jeambar of *L'Express* and Jean

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[38] Ibid.
[39] Alain Lipietz, "La justice, pas la vengeance," *Liberation,* 29 September 2001, 11.
[40] Jean-Gabriel Fredet, "Somalie: le mistigri pour Bill Clinton," *Le Nouvel Observateur,* 5 January 1993, 36.
[41] Marie-Hélène Labbe, "Prolifération - le chantier négligé par Washington," *Le Figaro,* 1 December 2001, 14.

Daniel of *Le Nouvel Observateur*, also demonstrated a degree of ambivalence towards American power. After the exclusion of the U.S. from a 2001 UN Commission on Human Rights, Jeambar was disgusted by the jubilation of other nations at America's humiliation. He claimed that American arrogance may be irritating, but railed at the fact that the U.S. was chased from the international organization by the likes of Sudan, Syria, Libya, Sierra Leone, and other dictatorships.[42] He labelled the scenario "shocking and unacceptable" and called the European "silence" after this event "deplorable."[43] After September 11, 2001, Jean Daniel also defended the United States from the hatred it received on an international scale. He claimed that abhorrence towards America was likely a result of their hegemonic status, but it was also quite often undeserved.[44] These contradictory sentiments among French intellectual commentators are important to observe, but should not detract from the plethora of periodical opinion that expressed resentment towards the United States.

Image Summary & Analysis

According to polling and periodical opinion, the image of the United States as an international power was quite negative in the 1990s. In the polls, America was increasingly perceived as a self-serving economic and political hegemon after the Cold War. French periodical opinion also demonstrated this perception. Across both right-wing and left-wing periodicals, America was blamed for imposing unfair economic sanctions

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[42] Denis Jeambar, "Détestable silence," *L'Express*, 17 May 2001, 5.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Jean Daniel, "Trois mois après," *Le Nouvel Obervateur*, 13 December 2001, 40–41.

on France and selfishly promoting the standardization of American economic policies throughout the world. Across right and left periodicals, America was also resented for establishing global political hegemony by controlling NATO and maintaining the world's most powerful military. Further, America's unilateral decisions over the Kyoto protocol, the ABM Treaty, and the ICC contributed to America's image in France as a unilateral international power. While French opinion of the America increased in negativity after the Cold War, the polling and periodical evidence also demonstrated a residual degree of confidence in American power. Considering French perceptions of American hegemony, this contradiction may be explained by France's expectation that American power *should* be used to solve global calamities. As Alain Gresh noted in *Le Monde Diplomatique,* "sometimes only America can make the difference between war and peace, liberty and repression, hope and fear."[45] If America is regarded as the world's most powerful nation, it makes sense that France would put confidence in America's capability to handle global crises. Be that as it may, France's confidence in American power has not inhibited its perception that America became a unilateral economic and political hegemon after the Cold War.

The polling and periodical opinion research in this theme therefore demonstrates that America's image in France was negative and deteriorating during the 1990s. According to the evidence presented, America's image was negative and deteriorating because the United States was increasingly perceived as an unfair, self-serving, and

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[45] Alain Gresh, "Croisade antiterroriste," 1. Alain Gresh was quoting President Clinton here. He discussed the global authority of the United States in his article.

unilateral hegemon after the Cold War. Considering America's rise to hyperpower status after the fall of the Soviet Union and America's increasingly unilateral posture in foreign policy during the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush administrations,[46] such a perception is understandable. However, the degree of antipathy towards America in this regard may also be indicative of increasing French anti-American sentiment. If one is reminded of the *Hegemonic Resentment* and *Class Struggle* scholarly perspectives, it seems obvious that French anti-Americanism would correlate directly to increases in America's global domination and the rise of globalization. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that French anti-Americanism intensified during the post-Cold War era out of resentment of American power and American-led globalization.

3.4 America as an Ally and Influence in French Political Affairs: According to the Polls

Another important aspect in evaluating the American image as an international power concerns how the French perceived America as an ally of France and the degree to which the United States was an influence in French political affairs. As a pre-1990s context to how the general French population viewed the Franco-American relationship, one survey found that during the 1980s, the French felt much closer to the United States as an ally than they had the decade before.[47] Other data to measure French perceptions of

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[46] Halfway through the Clinton administration, the national security strategy explained that America would use "decisive and, if necessary, unilateral force" when its essential interests were at stake. This is a quote from the 1995 national security strategy. (Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us?", 110). And for one commentary on the "Bush Doctrine" of unilateralism and preemption see: Richard Falk, "The New Bush Doctrine", *The Nation,* 15 July 2002, http://www.thenation.com/doc/20020715/falk

[47] The French American Foundation, "The French-American Study," (Conducted by The Gallup Organization, June 1982), 19–20. 53% believe military alliance is same in 1982 as in past vs. 31% in 1976.

America as a partner and political influence before the 1990s are scarce, but what does exist suggests that the 1980s was a period of relative Franco-American closeness.[48] Throughout the 1990s, however, polling data demonstrates a largely negative image of America as an ally and influence in French political affairs.

In 1995, one survey revealed that 64% of French respondents—much more than any other West European nation—believed that America did not try to understand their problems.[49] In the same year, 63% of French respondents believed that America expects France to give in to its wishes when issues arise between the two countries.[50] Also in 1995, only 52% of the French—at least 15% less than the British, Germans, and Italians—believed that the U.S. treated their country with respect.[51] When asked if they regarded themselves as a faithful ally to the United States in 1996, only 32% believed so, while 50% believed they were unfaithful.[52] By 1998, the perception of strained Franco-American relations had not recovered. According to a different survey, 68% of French respondents agreed that "the U.S. does not treat us as an equal partner in affairs that

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In 1982, only 27% believe military alliance no longer exists vs. 47% who felt that way in 1976. —This is likely due to tightening of Franco-American relations in the wake of the contentious and divisive Vietnam War.

[48] Richard Kuisel, "What Do the French Think of Us?", 101. Richard Kuisel points to polling statistics that suggest the 1980s was a period of relative pro-Americanism: "In 1984 more of the French (44 percent) than Germans or British declared themselves 'pro-American'. By 1988 very few found US engagement in Europe excessive."

[49] U.S. Department of State, Office of Research and Media Reaction, "America as a Global Actor: The U.S. Image Around the World," January 1995.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Polling data reported in Newspaper article: Alain Frachon, "L'image des Etats-Unis ne cesse de se dégrader en France," *Le Monde,* 31 October 1996. Retreived November 15, 2006 from Factiva database.

concern us both."[53] Again, the French recorded significantly higher percentages than any other West European nation in this study.

In the mid- to late-1990s, France also demonstrated a dislike for the American influence over French political affairs. When asked whether they agreed that the U.S. had too much influence over France and its affairs, 71% of the French agreed in 1995 and 74% agreed in 1998.[54] In both of these surveys, the French recorded notably higher percentages than other West European nations. In the same year, a majority of the French (58%) still believed the U.S. sincerely cared about the security of Europe while nearly 70% felt that their relations with America were as important as during the Cold War.[55] It appears that during the 1990s, the general French population felt misunderstood, belittled, and disrespected in their relationship with the United States. France has also reflected this sentiment more than any other west European nation. At the same time, however, the French general public seemed to acknowledge the importance of Franco-American relations.

Demonstrating a desire to break free from dependence on American security after the Cold War, the French public also expressed the intent to take charge of European security and defence without the United States.[56] In 1998, for example, one survey demonstrated that the French had the lowest ratings of support for NATO out of every

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[53] "Seeking a New Balance," 15.
[54] U.S. Department of State, "America as a Global Actor" for 1995 data; and "Seeking a New Balance," 15 for 1998 data.
[55] "Seeking a New Balance," 13 & 14.
[56] In regards to their security environment, the dissolution of the Soviet Union did not bring about tremendous optimism. In 1998, only 57% believed the world had become safer after the fall of the Berlin Wall. ("Seeking a New Balance," 13.)

other European nation.[57] Only 50% of the French believed NATO to be essential to their security.[58] Instead, 91% of the French advocated a common defence policy among EU nations and 70% desired a common EU defence force as an alternative to NATO.[59] Much more than other EU nations, the French promoted the EU to make the most important decisions for the security of Europe and take a leadership role in the world.[60] The greater part of France also saw EU membership as a good thing; and slight majorities believed political and economic European unification to be "mostly good."[61] These late 1990s findings suggest that France, more so than its EU neighbours, had the desire to create its own European alternative to American security and leadership.

Polling Summary

An analysis of the preceding polling data suggests that France did not express a favourable perception of America as an ally and influence in French political affairs after the Cold War. More than most other European nations, France believed that it suffered from disrespect and disregard in its relations with the United States. Even though majorities in France acknowledged the importance of Franco-American relations,

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[57] "Seeking a New Balance," 14–21.
[58] "Seeking a New Balance," 14.
[59] "Seeking a New Balance," 21. These survey questions do not suggest European defence specifically as an alternative to NATO, but the author has assumed this given the context of the survey, and the 61% of the French that prefer the EU over NATO to make security decisions referenced in another question of the same survey.
[60] "Seeking a New Balance," 22. —61% of the French prefer the EU as a decision maker over NATO compared with 49% of the Germans; 83% of the French desire EU world leadership compared with 76% of British and 72% of Germans
[61] "Seeking a New Balance," 21–22. 73% of the French believe EU membership is a good thing; 54% in France see political unification in Europe "mostly good" vs. 33% who see it mostly bad; and 55% in France see economic unification in Europe "mostly good" vs. 33% see it mostly bad.

majorities also expressed resentment of American political influences and demonstrated a desire to break free from France's alleged dependence on American security. Focusing primarily on America's influence over French security and defence, the periodical opinion will clarify the unfavourable image of America as an influence in French political affairs.

3.5 America as an Ally and Influence in French Political Affairs: According to Periodical Opinion

Similar to the polling analysis in the previous section, the analysis of periodical opinion has revealed a negative image of America as an ally and influence over French political affairs after the Cold War. Across right and left periodicals, French commentators have portrayed America as a domineering ally that asserts control over France through NATO and the absence of an effective European defence capability. Accordingly, commentators have expressed resentment of American political influences in Europe and have challenged Europe to establish an identity independent from the United States.

Commentators from the right and left have demonstrated a sentiment that French reliance on U.S. security is an obstacle to France's sovereignty. In 1994, *L'Express* criticized France for living under the protection of the "American umbrella" and challenged France to break free from the U.S. influence and the American-led NATO

defence system.[62] Two years later, the magazine again complained that America was too influential over French affairs. France, warned the editor of *L'Express*, ought to focus on European concerns and avoid the "temptation" of interpreting the world "according to American priorities."[63] A few years later, another right-leaning French periodical, *Le Point*, complained about French dependence on the United States for security. The editor, Claude Imbert, asserted that European nations should be able to control what happens on their own soil, and resented the situation in which the absence of a common European defence system has merely heightened U.S. power in Europe.[64] In other editorials that year, Imbert denounced the "reliance of Europe on American defence,"[65] and criticized France for being "under the direction of America."[66]

Periodicals on the left of the political spectrum also demonstrated resentment against America's influence over French political affairs. In 1997, Paul-Marie De la Gorce of *Le Monde Diplomatique* criticized the United States for inhibiting Jacques Chirac's attempts to create a European defence system outside of NATO. He claimed the U.S. was trying to ensure French dependence on the "supervision" of American defence, and asserted that America was not seeking to "protect" nations in the NATO sphere, but rather "control" them.[67] Jean Daniel of *Le Nouvel Observateur* also pessimistically claimed that within NATO, "Europe is militarily dependant on the United States."[68] In

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[62] Yann de L'Ecotais, "L'Amérique s'éloigne," *L'Express*, 20 January 1994, 3.
[63] Christine Ockrent, "Les hoquets de la paix," *L'Express*, 15 February 1996, 3.
[64] Claude Imbert, "Europe: nouvelle frontière," *Le Point*, 3 April 1999, 5.
[65] Claude Imbert, "Les leçons de la guerre," *Le Point*, 17 April 1999, 7.
[66] Claude Imbert, "Nation et passions," *Le Point*, 10 April 1999, 5.
[67] Paul-Marie de la Gorce, "L'OTAN aux portes de la Russie," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, July 1997, 10.
[68] Jean Daniel, "Mars ou la guerre jugée," *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 1 April 1999, 22–23.

another editorial, Daniel spoke bitterly about how Europe found itself "entirely dependent on the United States military" despite the progress that the continent achieved, such as the monetary union.[69] And in yet another editorial, Daniel claimed again to be "revolted" by "NATO under the American influence." He wrote that "[Europeans] have the right to come together as a continent" and shake off the "abusive hegemonic power" and influence of the United States.[70]

Periodical opinion has also demonstrated that the French desired to create a "European alternative" to American security and leadership in the 1990s. After the Maastricht treaty negotiations had been a relative success in Europe, some French periodical commentators became excited about the potential of a European continent free of American control. In 1994, *L'Express* spoke optimistically about a "new era for Europe," an era in which the fall of communism and changing U.S. priorities had offered France more autonomy.[71] Two years later, *L'Express* proclaimed, "the world still needs Europe," and suggested that France should embrace European power as an alternative to the U.S. supremacy.[72] Toward the end of the 1990s, there also appeared to be a clear sentiment in both right- and left-leaning periodicals that Europe should establish independence from American influence. During the Kosovo crisis, Jean Daniel of *Le Nouvel Observateur* claimed that "for the first time, during this war one has the impression that France has a voice and that Europe does indeed exist."[73] Daniel went on

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[69] Jean Daniel, "Le sens d'un combat," 22 April 1999, 24–25.
[70] Jean Daniel, "Mauvaise guerre, juste combat," 8 April 1999, 22–23.
[71] Yann de L'Ecotais, "Les Européens seuls," *L'Express*, 16 June 1994, 3.
[72] Christine Ockrent, "Les hoquets de la paix," 3.
[73] Jean Daniel, "Un Kosovo européen," *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 15 April 1999, 20–21.

to explain that the events in Kosovo should be taken as an opportunity for Europe to form "a European identity independent of the United States."[74] In 1999, Claude Imbert of *Le Point* also spoke of a "new European conscience" that France ought to embrace.[75] In the same year, Imbert went on to argue that the Kosovo crisis had "awakened a new European identity"[76] that may serve to strengthen European unity and reduce the continent's dependence on America.[77] According to the periodical opinion surveys, it appears that a sentiment exists on the right and left of French society that Europe ought to purge itself of the American influence and form an identity autonomous from the United States.

Image Summary & Analysis

According to polling and periodical opinion after the Cold War, it appears that the American image as an ally and influence in French political affairs has not been positive. While the polls demonstrated that the French population generally trusts the United States for protection, they also revealed that the French dislike how they are treated and influenced by the United States. This contradiction may be attributed to the reality that Europe has relied on American defence and security in their hemisphere, and will continue to depend on American defence and security until it finds a realistic alternative. With this in mind, such "trust" in American security may result from a necessity to rely on American power for protection against external threats. This contradiction should not

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[74] Ibid.
[75] Claude Imbert, "Le Kosovo et nous," *Le Point,* 23 April 1999, 5.
[76] Claude Imbert, "Le droit et la force," *Le Point,* 4 June 1999, 5.
[77] Claude Imbert, "Les leçons de la guerre," 7.

detract from the majority of polling opinion that has portrayed a negative image of the U.S. as an ally and influence in French political affairs. Overall, the polls have generally demonstrated that the French do not rate themselves as a loyal ally to America after the Cold War[78] and that the French resent America's influence over their affairs. The French also seemed to express such sentiments more than their European neighbours. France's more pronounced perceptions may be indicative of a more visceral resentment of America or a deeper rivalry with the United States than other European nations. It is not possible or necessary to explain the different mentalities of every European nation in regards to their views of American political influences in Europe. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that France is one European nation that adamantly challenges American political influences and is the strongest and most vocal advocate for common European political authority. In all, French intellectuals mirrored the sentiment found in the polling data analysis. French commentators from both sides of the political spectrum elucidated why America's image was so negative in the polls: the French have generally perceived America's involvement in European defence to be controlling French priorities and inhibiting French sovereignty. Accordingly, the French have desired more autonomy from the political influence of their American ally through a common European political power and defence corps.

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[78] The French American Foundation, "France-États-Unis: regards croisés." France has rated itself as a poor ally to America in 1996 (see section 3.4); and continued to do so after the 1990s. From 2000 to 2005 a Sofres survey asked the French to rate if they believed each country was loyal to the other. A trend toward disloyalty was shown over the five year period. During the same time, another survey question asked if France and the United States were above all allies, adversaries, or both. A trend towards being adversaries was demonstrated during these five years.

The polling and periodical opinion research in this category therefore demonstrates that America's image in France was negative and deteriorating during the 1990s. According to the evidence presented, America's image was negative and deteriorating because the French increasingly resented America's pervasive influence over their affairs. Considering France's new security environment after the bi-polar world order, it is understandable why the French may have felt more irritated by America's political influence in their affairs. In the 1990s, when much of France believed that American defence was no longer needed in Europe, it is logical that they felt pervaded by America's continued military and political presence on the continent. Even so, the degree of French antipathy towards America's political influences after the Cold War also reflects anti-American sentiment.

As in the previous theme, the *Hegemonic Resentment* scholarly perspective may be supported by the research of this theme as an explanation for increasing French anti-Americanism during the post-Cold War era. Again, the French appear to have been resentful of America's hegemony, particularly when it is perceived to limit their political aspirations. In addition to the *Hegemonic Resentment* scholarly perspective, the research of this theme may also support two other scholarly perspectives of French anti-Americanism: *Grandeur Establishment* and *Rivalry*. It seems evident through the research that the French desired to challenge and oppose American hegemony, even more than their European counterparts, by taking control of a new European superpower. This sentiment may be an indication of a long-standing rivalry with the United States and an aspiration to re-establish global esteem. If such indications are warranted, it seems

apparent that French anti-Americanism must have prevailed and increased during the post-Cold War era. Beyond an aversion to American hegemony, then, the research in this theme may substantiate post-Cold War French anti-Americanism as resentment towards a prevailing rival and a means by which France attempts to re-affirm grandeur by denouncing the influence of America in its political affairs.

After examining the 1990s American image among three themes in this chapter—trends in America's general reputation, America as an international power, and America as an ally and influence in French political affairs—the succeeding chapter will complete the analysis of America's post-Cold War image. Using further polling data and periodical opinion analysis, chapter four will explain America's image as a socio-economic model and as a cultural influence in the post-Cold War period.

CHAPTER 4:

America's Image in France: Society, Economy, and Culture

4.1 America as a Social and Economic Model: According to the Polls

After assessing America's image as an international power and ally of France, important observations may be made about the post-Cold War image of American society in France. A variety of polling data serves to demonstrate how the French have rated America as a society and socio-economic model in relation to themselves. According to the polls, the image of America as a social and economic model has been consistently negative.

Throughout nearly every survey since the 1980s, the French have recorded negative opinions towards the U.S. as a social model. In two Gallup surveys, one conducted in 1982 and the other in 1991, French respondents were asked to rank the United States according to whether they provided positive or negative examples for scientific research, equality between men and women, efforts on behalf of third world countries, reduction of social inequalities, and the education of children.[1] In both surveys, large majorities in France rated the U.S. as a bad example in every category except for gender equality and scientific research. The numbers were particularly low with regard to social equality and education.[2] Thus, even before the end of the Cold War, polling statistics began to demonstrate a negative image of America as a social and economic model.

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[1] The French American Foundation, "The French-American Study," 23–26; and "The Gallup/ French American Foundation 1991 Image Study," 12–14.

[2] Gallup 1991. In 1991, more French believed that the US offered a bad rather than a good example for social equality (59% vs. 29%) and education (41% vs. 38%).

By the mid-1990s, the image of the U.S. as a social and economic model had not improved. One survey in 1995 asked respondents if the United States provided a good model for other countries to follow. In this case, only 51% of the French believed the U.S. was a good model. In 1996, *Le Monde* also expressed polling results suggesting the dislike of the American social and economic image. Even though French unemployment was at 12% in 1996 compared with American unemployment of 5% in the same year, France continued to defend its social and economic model. Given a choice between the "French system" of strong social protection along with high unemployment, two-thirds of French respondents preferred their arrangement to the "American system" of little social protection and low unemployment.[3] At the same time, more respondents than not (38% vs. 25%) believed that France was fighting unemployment better than the United States. According to these findings, a majority of the French in the mid-1990s believed in the superiority of their social and economic model over the United States model.

In the first years of the 2000s, the general French perception of the U.S. model has remained fairly consistent. From 2000–2005, a Sofres survey asked respondents to compare themselves with the U.S. with regard to a variety of factors including education, universities, technology, social protection, fighting crime, cultural coexistence, unemployment, and integration of immigrants.[4] During these years, respondents rated the U.S. significantly better only in developing technology and moderately better in regards to university education. The French believed they performed the same as the U.S. in

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[3] Alain Frachon, "L'image des Etats-Unis ne cesse de se dégrader en France."

[4] The French American Foundation, "France-États-Unis: regards croisés." Public Transportation and Health care were also variables in the survey. Public transportation did not demonstrate any significant results and no data was recorded in France for Health Care.

terms of unemployment and moderately better than the U.S. in fighting crime, cultural coexistence, and integration of immigrants. Respondents further believed that France performed a great deal better than the U.S. in education and social protection.[5]

Polling Summary

According to polling data from the 1980s to present, it appears that the American social and economic image has been viewed negatively in France. The French have consistently rated their model superior to the American counterpart over the last 20 years, even when such a conclusion seems hypocritical or absurd.[6] While the French have credited the United States as a good model in some aspects, such as technology or gender equality, they have rated the U.S. negatively in the majority of its characteristics. Over the 20-year period, the French were consistently the most critical of American education and social protection. The analysis of opinion in leading periodicals portrays a similarly negative image of America as a social and economic model, but does so in much greater detail. The analysis of periodical opinion will therefore expand upon the image of America as a social and economic model.

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[5] In regards to trends over the period, the French rated the US more positively in fighting crime, cultural coexistence, integration of immigrants, education, and universities, but more negatively for unemployment, particularly in 2002.

[6] In consideration of high and stagnant unemployment rates in France; coupled with French racial tensions that were recently expressed in the 2005 Paris ban-lieu riots, its may seem hypocritical and absurd that the French would rate themselves better than the United States in fighting unemployment and integrating immigrants.

4.2 America as a Social and Economic Model: According to Periodical Opinion

According to French periodical opinion in the 1990s, the image of America as a social and economic model has also been largely negative. Editorial commentators from the right and left of French society have criticized the United States as a society and as a socio-economic model. Despite this negativity, however, there also exists a large element of self-criticism among right-wing intellectuals. Several editorial commentators from the right have taken a contradictory stance to the majority of polling and periodical opinion in France by challenging their nation to embrace a more American style socio-economic system through globalization and Europeanization.

Throughout the 1990s, a great deal of left-wing periodical opinion criticized America as a flawed society. *Le Monde Diplomatique* provides the best example as its articles routinely condemned America's democracy, media, violence, and racism during the decade. In the early 1990s, Norman Birnbaum denounced American democracy as hypocritical, stating, "In a nation that doesn't hesitate to give lessons in democracy...only 50% [of Americans] vote in federal elections."[7] He then characterized American politics as exploitative. In American democracy, argued Birnbaum, racial tensions are ignored or exploited by politicians and the wealthy unfairly impose their will upon the masses.[8] A few years later, Serge Halimi of *Le Monde Diplomatique* similarly criticized American society for its inward-looking media. Halimi took exception to the lack of American news correspondents in Europe and railed at the fact that the America media focused more on

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[7] Norman Birnbaum, "Les parties americaines confrontes a," *Le Monde Diplomatique,* December 1991.
[8] Ibid.

the O. J. Simpson trial than the atrocities in Rwanda.[9] Despite the super-power status of America, complained Halimi, American journalists are more concerned with their own affairs than what is occurring internationally.[10] The following year, Jamil Salmi of *Le Monde Diplomatique* also criticized American society. Blaming the prevalence of American firearms for "massacres at [American] schools" and "killings at [American] shopping malls," Salmi believed that America was a violent society.[11] He pointed to the U.S. murder rate being six times that of Europe's and concluded that within the United States, "atrocities are committed every day."[12]

Le Monde Diplomatique was not the only newsmagazine to demonstrate negative criticism of America as a society. Right wing journals such as *Le Figaro* and *L'Express* also exemplified negative perceptions of American civilization. Alain Griottery of *Le Figaro,* for instance, blatantly labelled American society as flawed and inferior. Shortly after the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Griottery was angered that America "stole" the centennial Olympic celebration from the Greeks and was astounded that such a "grand sick nation" like America could win so many Olympic medals.[13] "Despite the inferiority of their country," claimed the editor, "the Americans managed to capture more medals than all other nations... [which has]...exacerbated their self-centred nationalism and isolationism from the rest of the world."[14] *L'Express* also judged American society to be corrupted. In the context of the 2000 American election, for example, Denis Jeambar

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[9] Serge Halimi, "Les medias américains délaissent Le Monde," *Le Monde Diplomatique,* August 1994, 28.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Jamal Salmi, "L'Amérique malade des armes à feu," *Le Monde Diplomatique,* April 1992.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Alain Griotteray, "Les villains Américains," *Le Figaro,* 10 August 1996, 12.
[14] Ibid.

claimed that the "spectacle" created by American politicians exposed the nation's societal ills. Jeambar concluded that "American reality" should not be summed up by its incredible growth rate and successful economy; rather, one should acknowledge that "the body of the hyper-power is infected."[15]

Observing that French periodicals from the right and left show evidence of negativity towards American society, it is also important to examine how French commentators have evaluated their society in reference to America. There are a few examples in French periodicals in which commentators deem their socio-economic model to be superior to America's. Surrounding the Juppé protests in the mid-1990s, for instance, commentators from both sides of the spectrum boasted about the French model.[16] As the "Juppé plan" was widely pereceived as an attempt to break down the French social welfare state and "Americanize" the French economy, *Le Nouvel Observateur* empathized with French protesters: "[The French] remain faithful in their social safety net and do not trust the present government to protect it."[17] Therefore, despite the merits of the Juppé system, claimed the magazine, France ought to abandon the measure and preserve its "superior" socio-economic model.[18] In the context of the 1995 demonstrations, *Le Figaro* also praised the French socio-economic model in relation to America. Criticizing American social assistance programs, Alain Griotteray

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[15] Denis Jeambar, "Le défi américain", *L'Express*, 16 November 2000, 9.
[16] Alain Juppé, French prime minister from 1995–1997, introduced a plan to privatize the French welfare state in November to December 1995. Known as the "Juppé Plan," the measure caused the biggest social conflict in France since the student protests of May 1968. Because of the enormous social resistance, the French government was forced to abandon the plan.
[17] Robert Schneider, "Pourquoi les Français craquent…," *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 20 November 1995, 26.
[18] Ibid.

cynically wrote: "So there is actually a social system in the United States?"[19] Griotteray compared France's high unemployment of 12.6% to America's low unemployment of 5.6%, but continued to consider the French socio-economic model superior to America. Despite the low unemployment rate in the United States, claimed Griotteray, the inadequacy of America's social system leaves little to be desired.[20]

There are several examples from right and left periodicals of French commentators criticizing American society and the American socio-economic model relative to France in the 1990s. Nevertheless, a plethora of editorials—specifically from the right—have criticized French society and its socio-economic model relative to America. Several right-wing opinion articles have challenged France to stop demeaning America and confront its own social and political failures. Jean Francois Revel of *Le Point*, for example, claimed that French intellectuals are obsessed with putting down American society and culture. He challenged the French to be less fearful and critical of America and instead divert their energy to promote progressive change in French society.[21] Some right-wing commentators also turned French criticisms of America as a racist and politically flawed society back upon the French.[22] And several other right-wing commentators challenged France to be more open to the changes of modernity. Claude Imbert of *Le Point* exemplified this view in a 1995 editorial, stating, "The major

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[19] Alain Griotteray, "Les villains Américains."
[20] Ibid.
[21] Jean-François Revel, "Culture: Ne craignons pas l'Amérique", *Le Point*, 21 March 1992, 5–53.
[22] Jean Francois Revel condemned France for marginalizing African immigrants, much as America has done with its African-American population (Jean Francois Revel, "Ghettos américains ghettos européens," *Le Point*, 9 May 1992, 19.) and Denis Jeambar claimed that "Chirac and Jospin [had] created a spectacle just as chaotic in France as [was] happening on the other side of the ocean" during the 2000 election campaign. (Denis Jeambar, "La cohabitation spasmodique," *L'Express*, 30 November 2000, 5.)

fault of France, its people and its government is to continue to reason as if they are the only citizens of the world."[23] Imbert went on to explain that France could only solve its social and economic crises if it adapted to the realities of the outside world.[24] Christine Ockrent of *L'Express* echoed the sentiment of Imbert. Commenting on the new "open world" of globalization, Ockrent argued that "to establish solidarity in this new world [France] needs imagination not scepticism."[25] And a few years later, Yann de L'Ecotais of *L'Express* challenged France to be realistic with its own shortcomings and embrace modernity: "We live in a society that seems to ban self-criticism," claimed L'Ecotais, "but we live in a time that needs it."[26]

Encouraging self-criticism, right-wing commentators concluded that insular French thinking, French socialism, and anti-Americanism was inhibiting necessary progress in France. Throughout the 1990s, *Le Figaro* claimed that the "social system [was] the key to the problems France suffers from,"[27] "the social system is holding France back,"[28] and "the social state only leads to disaster."[29] *Le Figaro* placed blame for the inadequacies of their socio-economic model upon the left of French society. Speaking of the "mythology of socialism" perpetuated by the "errors of the left,"[30] the magazine concluded that "only the left act as if everything that works elsewhere does not merit

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[23] Claude Imbert, "Une défaite française," *Le Point,* 23 December 1995, 5.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Christine Ockrent, "1996," *L'Express*, 4 January 1996, 3.
[26] Yann de L'Ecotais, "Commotion," *L'Express*, 24 March 1994, 3.
[27] Louis Pauwels, "Sinistrose," *Le Figaro,* 14 December 1991, 21.
[28] Jean d'Ormesson, "L'héritage," *Le Figaro,* 7 December 1991, 29.
[29] Guy Sorman, "Crise de l'intelligence," *Le Figaro,* 29 May 1999, 11.
[30] Alain Griotteray, "L'opposition au bois dormant," *Le Figaro,* 2 August 1997, 5.

being applied here."[31] Alain Griotteray of *Le Figaro* complained that France's obsession with criticizing the American model has made it "nearly impossible for the French to see that there are other successful economic models out there."[32] And *Le Point* also demonstrated a strong element of self-criticism regarding the French social system. During the 1990s, Claude Imbert complained of the high unemployment in France,[33] the "archaic" and "absurd nationalism of Mitterand,"[34], and the "strong opposition to the American model in France."[35] Imbert concluded that France is a "victim of its socialist history" and needs to adopt a modern socio-economic model.[36] He ultimately recommended that France align its socio-economic model closer to the United States.[37]

The majority of right periodical opinion proposed to rescue France from its high unemployment and economic stagnation by adopting an American style socio-economic model.[38] Through a modernized socio-economic model, strengthened by a European economic community, right-wing commentators spoke optimistically about challenging the economic hegemony of the United States. Editorials from all of the right wing periodicals challenged France to accept the privatized market and embrace globalization and Europeanization. *Le Figaro* declared that "Europe must come together and unite" for

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[31] Guy Sorman, "La regression française," *Le Figaro,* 26 July 1997, 7.
[32] Alain Griotteray, "L'énigme américain," *Le Figaro,* 24 August 1996, 9.
[33] Claude Imbert, "Le printemps de la vie," *Le Point,* 12 March 1994, 5.
[34] Claude Imbert, "L'Etat c'est eux," *Le Point,* 2 February 2001, 5.
[35] Claude Imbert, "Nation et passions," 5.
[36] Claude Imbert, "Demagogies," *Le Point,* 9 April 1994, 5.
[37] Claude Imbert, "Les visiteurs," *Le Point,* 18 June 1999, 5.
[38] The vast majority of periodical opinion criticizing the French social system has come from the right, but there was some evidence that the left criticized the French system. During the Juppe protests, for example, Jean Daniel of *Le Nouvel Observateur* questioned whether it was realistic to maintain France's generous social services in light of the nation's weak economy and stunted economic growth. (Jean Daniel, "Le défi lancé à la France," *Le Nouvel Observateur,* 14 December 1995, 22–23.

the economic well-being of France.[39] The magazine claimed that through economic integration and unification with Europe, France could compete with American economics,[40] and "counter the aggressive commercial activity of the United States."[41] *L'Express* similarly challenged France to stabilize its economy through Europe.[42] The magazine's editor, Yann de L'Ecotais, argued that nations such as America were "'piloting' the world money markets to satisfy their own needs."[43] De L'Ecotais suggested that France would only be successful if it imitated larger world powers, like America, and created its own influence in the world markets through an economically strong Europe.[44] *Le Point* also blamed France's old-fashioned socio-economic model for the nation's economic failures. The editor, Claude Imbert, criticized France for spending 55% of its GNP on social assistance while maintaining high unemployment.[45] Meanwhile, he praised America for its "full" employment, even though it devoted only 34% of its GNP to public program spending.[46] Imbert complained that centralism and state control over French services and organizations had made France "the dinosaur within Europe, virtually forgotten in the second half of this century."[47] He exclaimed that France "cannot survive if they only focus within their borders"[48] and challenged the

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[39] Jean-Marc Sylvèstre, "Jacques Calvert: 'Le Japon profite du libéralisme des autres'," *Le Figaro*, 7 December 1991.
[40] Antoine-Pierre Mariano, "Euro, fluctuat nec mergitur," *Le Figaro*, 4 December 1999, 14.
[41] Gérard Gachet, "Accélération européenne," *Le Figaro*, 25 October 1999, 2.
[42] Yann de L'Ecotais, "Le franc et l'Europe," *L'Express*, 22 July 1993, 3.
[43] Yann de L'Ecotais, "La fin du libre-échange?", *L'Express*, 7 October 1993, 3.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Claude Imbert, "Le vent d'Amérique," *Le Point*, 7 September 1996, 5.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Claude Imbert, "La France somnambule," *Le Point*, 9 December 1995, 5.
[48] Claude Imbert, "Chasse royale," *Le Point*, 13 March 1993, 5.

French to shed their "europessimism" and "euroscepticism."[49] Imbert concluded: "France must look outside its borders to the advantages of a more United Europe… [to ensure]…that France will not be silenced by the powerful markets of America and Asia."[50]

Image Summary & Analysis

According to polling and periodical opinion, the image of American society and its socio-economic model has been largely negative in France. As seen in the polls, the general French population has consistently rated their society better than the U.S. in nearly every category over the last two decades and has regarded America as a poor example for other nations to follow. In both right and left French opinion pages, editorial commentators demonstrated harsh criticism of American society. Intellectuals have specifically condemned America's high murder rate, low voter turnouts in American elections, major discrepancies of wealth and class in American society, and the absence of a strong American social safety net. Such criticisms may explain why America took on an image as "a grand sick society" in the 1990s. Similar to the polling opinion, right and left periodical opinion has also criticized America as a socio-economic model for France to follow, but this sentiment appeared to be much more varied across French society than was evidenced in the polls. There was a unique perception among right-wing periodicals that France is limited by its economic system and needs to adopt a more American style

[49] Claude Imbert, "Europe: la depression du homard," *Le Point,* 19 December 1992, 5.
[50] Claude Imbert, "Europe: l'intérêt national," *Le Point*, 17 April 1992, 5.

socio-economic model. Such a difference between the perceptions of right-wing and left-wing commentators may be explained by their differing political and economic biases. As the French right tends to be more economically conservative than the left, it is not surprising that they would admire the liberalized American economic system much more than others in French society. In all, the contradiction in America's image as a socio-economic model is an important observation, but it should not detract from the general negativity towards the American image as a social and economic model that is represented in the rest of France. Overall in the polls and periodical opinion, the French have adamantly criticized American society. The relative admiration of America's economic system by the French right is but a minor exception to the larger French perception that America is a flawed society with a defective socio-economic model.

The polling and periodical opinion research in this theme therefore demonstrates that America's image in France was negative, but not necessarily deteriorating during the 1990s. According to the evidence presented, America's image in France was consistently negative during this decade because the French perceived America as a flawed society with a poor socio-economic system. Indeed, American society has had its problems with political spectacles, low voter turnouts in elections, race relations, immigration, violence, distribution of wealth, and an absence of a safety net for its vulnerable citizens. These issues may be partly responsible for the negative perceptions France retains of American society. But France's consistently outspoken condemnation of American social ills seems to be somewhat of an obsession. French society has suffered many, if not all, of the same afflictions that it charges America for, yet the French maintain an unshakable belief in the

superiority of their social and economic model. This implies some irrationality and some anti-American sentiment.

Several of the scholarly perspectives for French anti-Americanism may be supported by the research discussed in this theme. Evidence of irrationally negative opinions of American society may suggest that misjudgments of America by the French elite, as discussed in the *Elite Creation* perspective, have managed to pervade French society over time to such an extent that the French are incapable of acknowledging merit in America's social achievements. Research demonstrating an apparent French obsession to denounce American society may be indicative of France's desire to build its esteem by putting down the achievements of its historical rival (discussed in the *Rivalry* perspective). Confirmation of a staunch disapproval of America's socio-economic system, specifically on the left, may prove that "the principal function of anti-Americanism has always been, and still is, to discredit liberalism by discrediting its supreme incarnation… to travesty the United States as a repressive, unjust, racist—even fascist—society was a way of proclaiming: look what happens when liberalism is implemented"[51] (discussed in the *Class Struggle* perspective). In all, the variety of scholarly perspectives supported by the research in this theme, and the fact that French aversion to American society has not changed since the end of the Cold War, eludes to the complex and visceral nature of French anti-Americanism as a condemnation and resentment of America's social and economic model.

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[51] Jean-Francois Revel, *Anti-Americanism,* 12.

4.3 American Popular Culture and its Influence in France: According to the Polls

Even more than the image of America as a social and economic model, the image of American popular culture and its influence in France has been ambivalent after the Cold War. A variety of polling opinion suggests that America's cultural influence has been perceived to be more excessive in France after the Cold War. Nevertheless, majorities of the general French population still receive American popular culture without resistance and widely tolerate many of America's cultural exports.

The image of American popular culture and its influence in France has greatly changed over the last two decades. Before the end of the Cold War, the French recorded relatively little resentment of America's influences in their culture and society. In 1986, one poll demonstrated that only 25% of the French believed American interest was excessive within their country, compared with 38% who actually found American interest too little, and 31% who felt it was just right.[52] In the same year, the French also claimed to have little exposure to American people within France. When respondents were asked if they had been given an occasion to meet Americans, a majority of 52% had not, compared with 36% who had met a few Americans, and only 12% who had met many Americans. It is difficult to say whether the French masses had a greater opportunity to meet American people into the 1990s, but it is fair to claim, according to the polling statistics to follow, that French exposure to America and its popular culture greatly increased as the Cold War came to an end.

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[52] The French American Foundation, "The Gallup/ French American Foundation 1991 Image Study," 35.

To measure the excessiveness of American culture within France over 21 years, Sofres conducted surveys on the French population between 1984 and 2005 [see figure 4-1].[53] Among a list of categories, the survey asked respondents whether or not they found the American cultural export "excessive."[54] Interesting trends may be demonstrated over the period. Between 1984 and 1988, there was a dramatic increase in the excessive ratings of American television programs from 45% to 67%. American television was also rated as the most excessive cultural variety throughout every year of the survey. During the late 1980s, there were also subtle increases in the excessive ratings of American music and advertising.[55] For television, music, and advertising, the biggest increases were seen in the late 1980s, and their excessive ratings either levelled off or declined thereafter. In regards to American cinema and language, a consistent rising trend was demonstrated in cultural excessiveness between 1984 and 1994. Between these years, the excessive ratings of American cinema rose from 36% to 65% while the excessive ratings of the English language rose from 28% to 37%. Both of these variables reached their peak in 1994 and slightly declined in the years afterward. Rising trends were also seen in the excessive ratings of American food and clothing, but not until after 1994. Recording consistent numbers in the survey from 1984 to 1994, the excessive rating of food suddenly jumped from 12% in 1994 to 30% in 1996 and stayed consistently near 1996 levels thereafter. Clothing followed a similar trend, but its rise in 1994 was not as

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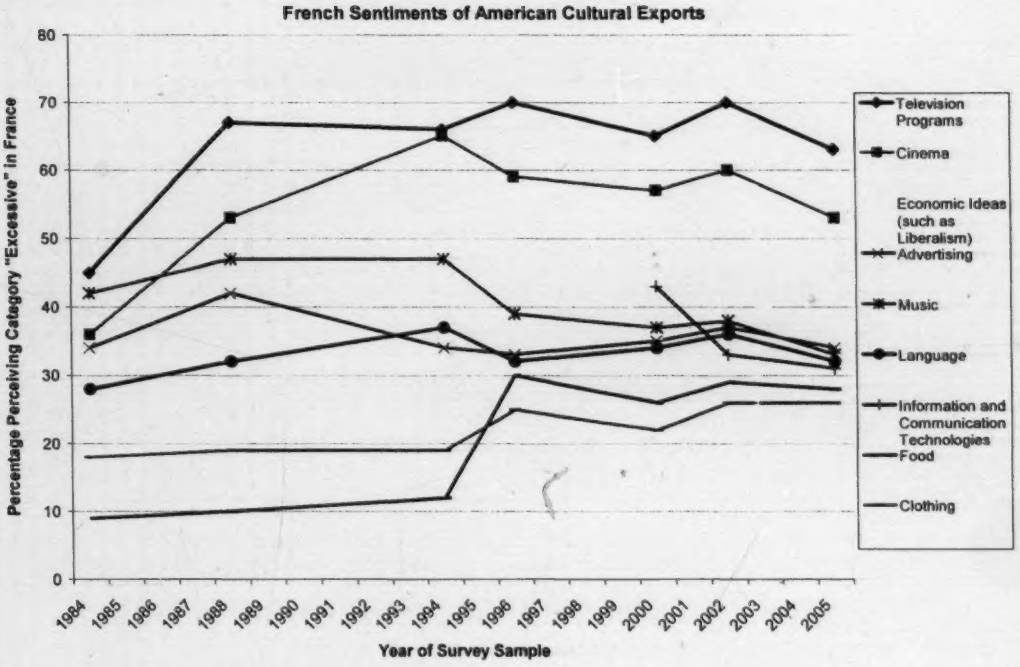
[53] The French American Foundation, "France-États-Unis: regards croisés."
[54] The French American Foundation, "France-États-Unis: regards croisés." The categories were: Television Programs, Cinema, Economic Ideas (such as liberalism), Advertising, Music, Language, Information and Communication Technologies, Food, and clothing.
[55] Advertising rose from 34% in 1984 to 42% in 1988 and declined thereafter.

significant.[56] Even though the variables of food and clothing did not drastically rise until after 1994, the variables of television, cinema, music, and language all declined or levelled off after 1994.

Though there have been differences in the trends of these cultural categories, the general tendency has been a significant rise in the excessive ratings of American cultural exports from 1984, and particularly after 1988. This rise subsequently dropped off sometime between 1994 and 1996. Despite the rising trend demonstrated over these years, only American television and cinema were recorded by majorities to be excessive in France. Up to 1994, music was close to a majority at 47%, but for the rest of the variables, minorities had recorded the excessive ratings.

[56] Clothing followed almost the exact trend as food over the duration of the survey, but its rise from 1994 to 1996 was only from 19% to 25%.

Figure 4-1:



Source: TNS Sofres & French American Foundation

Other survey data have demonstrated that the mid-1990s was a period in which the French, more so than any other European nation, regarded the American influence to be excessive and even threatening. In 1995, the French were the only clear majority in Europe (61%) to agree that U.S. culture was a threat to their own.[57] And in 1996, 64% of the surveyed population believed that American culture was excessive in the world.[58] It was in this year that *Le Monde* reported "the image of the United States has not stopped

[57] USIA, 1995
[58] LeMonde, 1996

deteriorating in France...particularly in the cultural domain" and "at a moment where American popular culture is more and more prevalent within the hexagon, the French are less and less willing to express their affection for their old American ally."[59]

Polling Summary

According to the polls, the image of American popular culture and its influence in France became more negative after the Cold War. It appears that the French found certain aspects of American culture overbearing in the 1990s, particularly between 1988 and 1994. Furthermore, in the mid-1990s, a majority of the French judged American culture as a threat to their own. Despite these observations, majorities in France did not rate many of America's cultural exports as excessive. In fact, only two of America's cultural exports—television and film—were judged by majorities to be excessive in France. According to this observation, one may conclude that despite overall increases in the excessive ratings of American cultural exports, many aspects of American culture were still widely tolerated and even liked in France after the Cold War. This paradox and the image of American popular culture in France will be clarified in greater detail with a discussion of French periodical opinion in the 1990s.

[59] LeMonde, 1996

4.4 American Popular Culture and its Influence in France: According to Periodical Opinion

Similar to the polling findings, periodical opinion portrayed the image of American popular culture and its influence to be excessive and threatening in the 1990s. With the rise of globalization and the heightening of America's global influence after the Cold War, France has been exposed to the influence of American culture more than ever before. As evidenced in the following periodical opinion, this exposure to American culture has caused many French commentators to label the American cultural influence imposing and invasive. Accordingly, right- and left-wing French periodical opinion has demonstrated a perception that American cultural influences are threatening the French language and other French cultural institutions through the Americanization of European and French culture.

Several editorials from a variety of periodicals demonstrated a perception that American culture was imposing and invasive after the Cold War. For example, Jean-Marie Rouart of *Le Figaro* claimed that Americans were guilty of "imposing their way of life, their social order, [and] their values on others."[60] Rouart compared American settlers, guilty of imposing their values upon Native Americans, to Americans in the twentieth century, guilty of imposing their values upon the world. He labelled American cultural and societal domination the "the original American sin" and likened it to a form of "genocide."[61] Francz-Olivier Giesbert of *Le Figaro* also expressed resentment of

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[60] Jean-Marie Rouart, "Massacre," *Le Figaro,* 26 June 1997, 2.
[61] Ibid.

American cultural influences. Calling America an "imperial power," Giesbert argued that America "indulges [France] with its cultural products...[which it]...imposes on others how they want and when they please."[62] In 1994, *Le Monde Diplomatique* commented on "the invasion of American popular culture,"[63] and two years later, editorial opinion in *L'Express* demonstrated the same proclivity. In 1996, Christine Ockrent of *L'Express* commented on the overwhelming influence of American culture, concluding, "American culture invades us even though we fight against it."[64] The influence of American culture was clearly judged to be excessive by many editorial commentators after the Cold War. This perception has also led many commentators to express fear of the American cultural influence.

The American cultural influence in the 1990s aroused fear among many that France would lose its cultural cornerstone—the French language. In response to such fears, in 1994 the minister of French culture, Jacques Toubon, passed a set of laws aimed at protecting the French language. The measure, known as the "Toubon law," was widely understood as an effort to counter the threatening invasiveness of the English language that had been perpetuated in France by the popularity of American culture. A few years after the implementation of his law, Jacques Toubon explained his views in *Le Figaro*. As the world is becoming more open, argued Toubon, "the importance of policies to

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[62] Francz-Olivier Giesbert, "De la pensée unique au manger unique," *Le Figaro,* 28 August 1999, 9. Giesbert complained specifically about hormone treated beef. America was a large supporter of genetically modified food, and despite French attempts to keep their agriculture "natural" they faced pressure to accept American agricultural exports and practices.

[63] Denis Duclos, "Pourquoi tant de 'tueurs en série' aux Etats-Unis?", *Le Monde Diplomatique,* August 1994, 26–27.

[64] Christine Ockrent, "Etats-Unis - A chacun son Amérique," *L'Express*, 22 Februaty 1996, 3.

protect a nation's culture [are] increasingly important."[65] He went on to explain that France remains culturally threatened by America and must defend itself against America's cultural invasiveness: "One cannot counter the power of American culture," claimed Toubon, "but one can defend his own."[66] An editorial in *Le Monde* echoed Toubon's claim that the French language was being threatened by the influence of American culture. The author of the editorial, Dominique Noguez, expressed an even deeper anxiety than Toubon, arguing that global commerce would render the "Toubon law" obsolete and further threaten the existence of the "sacred" French language.[67] Noguez reminisced nostalgically of the days when French was considered the official language in all designations. At the turn of the twenty-first century, however, he concluded that "language no longer seems to be key to humanity," but rather is seen as "an obstacle in the world of commerce."[68] He resented that the "language of Voltaire, Prouste, and Goethe no longer hold high esteem" in light of American English which has now become the world's "sacred" language.[69] According to these examples of periodical opinion, it appears that French intellectuals perceived American popular culture to be a threat to the French language after the Cold War.

Beyond fears that the French language would be threatened by the pervasiveness of American culture, many commentators feared that the changes of globalization would threaten the livelihood of other French cultural institutions. In 1993, *L'Express*

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[65] Jacques Toubon, "La culture pour tous et partout," *Le Figaro,* 29 December 2001, 12.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Dominique Noguez, "Une langue si 'easy'," *Le Monde,* 8 August 2002, 1.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

questioned what would happen to French "cultural products" if they entered into the GATT like all other products on the market. Yann de L'Ecotais feared that France would lose some of its cultural institutions if French film makers and television chains were entered into direct competition with American companies.[70] *Le Figaro* similarly expressed a fear of losing French culture by means of economic change. In 1995, for example, Alain Griotteray challenged the possibility of establishing a common European currency on the grounds that abandoning the franc would be abandoning an important part of French culture.[71] In the context of globalization, American corporations such as CNN were also seen as a threat to French cultural institutions. At the beginning of the decade, *Le Monde Diplomatique* demonstrated anxiety that CNN had reached unprecedented popularity in France after the Gulf War. The magazine claimed that CNN was "threatening the sovereignty of French networks."[72] Some years later, Alain Griotteray of *Le Figaro* also complained about the pervasiveness of CNN in France. He questioned why France needs cable T.V. channels like CNN which only "speak American" and are of little use to the French.[73] Criticizing CNN's hegemony over "planetary information," Griotteray expressed fear and resentment that the American media corporation was threatening the livelihood of French media institutions.

Due to the increased influence of American culture and its institutions, many commentators expressed a fear that French and European culture was becoming Americanized. According to *Le Point*, the creation of Euro Disney in Paris represented

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[70] Yann de L'Ecotais, "Cinema," 3.
[71] Alain Griotteray, "L'euro contre l'Europe," *Le Figaro*, 22 December 1995, 14.
[72] Yves Eudes, "La Guerre des chaines d'information," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, November 1991, 21.
[73] Alain Griotteray, "Télévision: Veut-on vraiment que le câble existe?", 29 July 1994, 8.

the "homogenization" of French culture through Americanization.[74] The magazine expressed trepidation that "Disney culture" would become a "monoculture" that overwhelmed the French from childhood to absorb and adopt American cultural products.[75] Benoit Duteurtre of *Le Figaro* also exemplified fears that European culture was becoming Americanized and homogenized. Referring to Eurovision—a European competition in vocal performance—Duteurtre protested the fact that 22 of the 25 performers presented their songs in English.[76] He further complained that 24 of the 25 contestants acted as if this were normal when speaking to journalists and boasted about the one exception to the group of performers—a Frenchwoman who expressed herself in her native tongue. Duteurtre concluded that "Europe is adopting a common culture," which is American.[77] He denounced "Yankee power" in the continent and complained that America's "hegemonic tendencies" had forced Europe to adopt the "worst of America," such as fast food, obesity, and merchandise.[78] Articles in *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* echoed Duteutre's fear that French and European culture were becoming Americanized. *Le Point* criticized the "cultural imperialism" of America and concluded that "the only 'pan-European' culture is American culture" and American culture was becoming "the new world culture."[79] *Le Nouvel Observateur* further complained that globalization was attempting to make "citizens of the global village." Through the globalization and Americanization of the world, Jean Daniel expressed a

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[74] Jean-Sebastien Stehli, "La culture cartoon," *Le Point,* 21 March 1992, 54–55.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Benoit Duteurtre, "Anti-US go home !", *Le Figaro,* 29 June 2002, 12.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Jean-Sebastien Stehli, "La culture cartoon," 54.

fear that the French would become separated from their past, their family, their religion, and their nation.[80]

Among the vast majority of French periodicals, it seems clear that American culture was perceived to be an increasingly overwhelming and excessive influence in France after the Cold War.[81] Some periodical commentators have blamed the excessiveness of American culture on the French public for consuming mass quantities of American cultural exports.[82] Benoit Duteurtre, for instance, cited French enthusiasm for the creation of the euro and Euro Disney as examples of France's responsibility for the American "cultural invasion."[83] Undoubtedly, France's love affair with American culture is partly responsible for the pervasive influence of American popular culture. However, regardless of the explanation for the prevalence of American culture in France, the excessive and threatening image of American popular culture remains. This indeed displays a paradox in French society. It appears the French enjoy consuming American popular culture, but also resent America's cultural influence.

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[80] Jean Daniel, "La mystique du territoire," *Le Nouvel Observateur,* 27 June 1996, 24–25.

[81] Though the vast majority of periodical opinion demonstrated fear and resentment of America's imposing cultural influence, some of the commentators criticized France for being unrealistic in its fears. Jean Francois Revel claimed that French intellectuals are too judgmental and obsessed with demeaning American culture. He encouraged France to stop being so negative towards American culture. (Jean-François Revel, "Culture: Ne craignons pas l'Amérique.") And, *Le Point* suggested that the French have an unrealistic fear about how much their culture is threatened by America. (Jean-Sebastien Stehli, "La culture cartoon," 54.)

[82] Francz-Olivier Giesbert criticized the French for their mass consumption of American culture (Francz-Olivier Giesbert, "De la pensée unique au manger unique").

[83] Benoit Duteurtre, "Anti-US go home !"

Image Summary & Analysis

An analysis of polling data and French periodical opinion demonstrates that the image of American popular culture and its influence in France has been largely ambivalent after the Cold War. Polling opinion has demonstrated that American culture was perceived to be more excessive in France and even threatening to French culture in the 1990s. Periodical opinion has reinforced this perception. Nevertheless, majorities of the general French population have widely tolerated many of America's cultural exports and have willingly consumed them. An explanation of this paradox may be discovered by comparing the perceptions of the general French population to the perceptions of French intellectuals. The general French population—as represented in the polls—appear to be rather ambivalent about the excessiveness and threatening posture of America's cultural influences. Pluralities have rated American television and film as excessive in France, but majorities seem rather indifferent to all other American cultural influences, including language. Conversely, both liberal and conservative French intellectuals—as represented in the periodicals—have consistently perceived American culture to be imposing, invasive, and threatening to French culture. French intellectuals expounded their fears of American culture by complaining about the influences of the American language; the growing popularity of the American media, television and film; and the expansion of American franchises and corporations. The French intellectuals seem to perceive American cultural influences to be more detrimental to French society than the masses do. With this in mind, it is quite understandable that many of the French commentators

feel aggravated by the mass consumption of American culture among the general French population.

The polling and periodical opinion research in this theme therefore demonstrates that America's image in France was somewhat negative and deteriorating during the 1990s. According to the evidence presented, America's image in France was moderately negative and deteriorating because some of the French, namely the intellectuals, perceived America's culture to be a threat to their own. Acknowledging the rise of America's global cultural influence throughout the twenty-first century, particularly after the Cold War,[84] it is understandable that the French would feel as if their culture was being increasingly pervaded by America during the 1990s. At the same time, the increasingly outspoken fear and resentment of American culture in France represents some anti-American sentiment.

The obvious scholarly perspective for French anti-Americanism that is supported by the research in this theme is *Cultural Preservation.* According to the polling and periodical evidence, it seems clear that the French resent America, at least in part, because they feel as if their way of life, national identity, and cultural heritage is being threatened by the ever-increasing popularity of American culture. Beyond the *Cultural Preservation* perspective, however, there is another less apparent scholarly perspective that may again be validated by the evidence provided in this thesis. As discussed in the *Elite Creation* perspective, elites have rationally and irrationally criticized American

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[84] America's cultural influence increased substantially after the Cold War because of Americas further ascend to global dominance and the rise of globalization in the 1990s which further spread American culture abroad.

society and culture since America's inception. While some of the irrational criticisms of American society may have been nullified over the years, the French elites have consistently regarded American culture as "low culture," "mass culture," and "consumer culture." When this argument of the *Elite Creation* perspective is considered, it may explain some of the thesis findings. If the elites have had an inherent aversion to American culture for the last 300 years, it is logical that they would fear and resent America's cultural influences in modern day. Furthermore, it is logical that French elites would express such fear and loathing much more than the masses of their nation.

Now that the post-Cold War image of America in France has been examined among five themes with specific polling and periodical evidence, this thesis has provided a clearer understanding of French anti-Americanism after the Cold War. This thesis will now summarize its results, answer its original research questions, and conclude if, how, and why French anti-Americanism may have evolved in the post-Cold War context.

CHAPTER 5:

Conclusion

While it is often well-understood that French anti-Americanism increased in the early years of the twenty-first century, it is a lesser-known fact that French anti-Americanism also began to dramatically increase in the preceding decade. Richard Kuisel alluded to this phenomenon in his polling research, but provided little evidence to demonstrate if, how, and why French perceptions of America changed during the 1990s. To follow Kuisel's lead, and to fill the gaps in his research, this thesis has investigated three new questions within the scholarly discourse on French anti-Americanism: 1) Was the image of America in France negative and worsening during the post-Cold War period? 2) If so, what might account for this change? 3) Would such a tendency imply that French anti-Americanism has evolved into something different and more severe during the post-Cold War era? To answer these questions, this thesis has examined the image of America in France during the post Cold War era using polling and periodical opinion data. Organized among five themes, the research findings of this thesis will be summarized in the following.

5.1 Trends of America's General Image and Reputation in France

The polling trends analysis in this thesis demonstrated that America's general image and reputation in France was much more negative in the 1990s than it had been in the 1980s. In the early 1990s, the French regarded America with less sympathy and favourability than they had before, and America was increasingly judged as an illiberal,

violent, and racist nation. Towards the latter half of the 1990s, America was perceived more as a powerful, wealthy and imperial nation than it had ever been before.

5.2 America as an International Power

In regards to America's image as an international power after the Cold War, polling data demonstrated that America was increasingly perceived as a nation that strived to impose its will on the rest of the world in order to protect its business interests and investments. Conversely, America was regarded less and less as a nation that strived to maintain world peace or to aid in the development of global democracy. These findings were confirmed by samples of French periodical opinion. During the post-Cold War era, intellectual commentators unanimously perceived America as a self-serving and unilateral power that pursued global economic and political hegemony. While some polling and periodical opinion reflected a sentiment of confidence in American power, the majority of evidence in the post-Cold War period demonstrated that the image of America as an international power was negative and deteriorating in France.

5.3 America as an Ally and Influence in French Political Affairs

According to polling opinion surveyed in this thesis, America's image as an ally and influence in French political affairs was also negative and worsening after the Cold War. During the 1990s, the French demonstrated some confidence in the United States for their protection and security. Nevertheless, a majority of the French did not identify America as a loyal ally and expressed resentment of America's political influence over

their nation. In the periodical opinion research, intellectual commentators unanimously perceived America's involvement in European defence to be controlling France's priorities and inhibiting its sovereignty. Consequently, French commentators advocated for more autonomy from the United States through the construction of a common European political body and defence capability.

5.4 America as a Social and Economic Model

In regards to America's image as a social and economic model to France, both the polling and periodical opinion research demonstrated negative and unchanging French perceptions of America. Before, during, and after the post-Cold War era, the French rated American society negatively in the polls, particularly in regards to its education and social security. During the 1990s, both right- and left-wing French periodicals criticized American society for its propensity towards violence, racism, and inequality. Some periodical opinion—particularly from the left of French society—also condemned America's socio-economic system for failing to provide adequate social protection for its citizens. Right-wing French intellectuals demonstrated contradictory perceptions to the rest of France by praising America's socio-economic model for its economic efficiency and low unemployment rates. Nevertheless, the admiration of America's economic system by the French right was an exception to the larger French perception that America is a flawed society with a defective socio-economic model.

5.5 American Popular Culture and its Influence in France

According to the polls, the general French population demonstrated ambivalent perceptions of American popular culture and its influence in France. Many of the French regarded some of America's cultural exports to be more excessive in the 1990s, and a slight majority regarded American culture to be a threat to French culture. Paradoxically, the general French population also tolerated many of America's cultural exports and willingly consumed them. In the periodical opinion surveys, French intellectuals demonstrated less ambivalence than the general population in their perceptions of American popular culture. In the 1990s, French commentators unanimously condemned American popular culture for invading France and threatening French culture. French intellectuals demonstrated specific fears of the American language, media, television, film, and the expansion of American franchises and corporations. Many of the intellectuals also blamed the French masses for consuming American culture and further spreading its influence in the nation.

In all, the polling and periodical opinion evidence has effectively answered the three questions this thesis has set out to investigate. Compiling the results from each of the five themes, the responses to these questions will be discussed in turn.

1) Was the image of America negative and worsening during the post-Cold War period?

The polling and periodical research in nearly every theme has demonstrated that the French perceived America more negatively in the 1990s than in the preceding decade. Furthermore, the evidence collectively revealed that America's image in France was negative and worsening within the years of the post-Cold War era.

2) If so, what might account for this change?

America's shifting image in France is mainly attributable to its changing geopolitical posture in the 1990s. More after the Cold War than ever before, the United States emerged as the global hyper-power. It also adopted a more unilateral foreign policy, promoted globalization, maintained a strong political and military presence in Europe, and further spread its cultural influence around the globe. Considering all of these factors, it is understandable that the French began to perceive America more as a global hegemon, a self-interested nation, an obstacle to European political and military autonomy, and an overwhelming cultural influence within the 1990s.

Undoubtedly the degree of French hostility towards America in the post-Cold War period is not justified. Many negative French perceptions of America reflect underlying and often irrational anti-American sentiment. Be that as it may, this thesis has demonstrated that rational or irrational, justified or not, the French perceived America more negatively in the 1990s. Such increasing negativity corresponds directly to, and is likely caused by, America's shifting geopolitical role in the world.

3) Would such a tendency imply that French anti-Americanism evolved into something different and more severe during the post-Cold War era?

Considering the increasingly hostile French opinions of America after the Cold War, and the variety of anti-American sentiment that has been justified by the thesis research, it is fair to conclude that French anti-Americanism has increased in occurrence and intensity during the post-Cold War era. With the exception of America's social and economic model, which was rated consistently negative by the French before, during, and

after the 1990s, the evidence of this thesis revealed that after the Cold War, America was increasingly resented as a self-serving hegemon in politics and economics, an overbearing influence in French political affairs, and cultural threat to France. Indeed, anti-Americanism has become more prevalent and complex since the end of the Cold War.

In all, the research and conclusions of this thesis support and contribute to the existing scholarship on French anti-Americanism. For instance, many of the scholarly theories for French anti-Americanism—discussed in the first chapter of this thesis—were further supported by polling and periodical research. The degree of antipathy towards American hegemony was indicative of the *Hegemonic Resentment* perspective; France's adamant desire to challenge and oppose American power through the European Union was reflective of the *Rivalry* and *Grandeur Establishment* scholarly perspectives; France's consistent condemnation of American society and culture, particularly among the intellectual class, was suggestive of the *Elite Creation* perspective; France's seemingly inherent fear of American liberalism, evident especially within the left of its society, was reminiscent of the *Class Struggle* perspective; and finally, France's loathing of America's cultural influence, particularly among the intellectual class, was indicative of the *Cultural Preservation* perspective.

Beyond tying the findings to the various scholarly perspectives, the research and conclusions of this thesis also support and elaborate upon Kuisel's theory of escalating French anti-Americanism. According to Kuisel, French anti-Americanism intensified after the Cold War because of France's retaliation against "a seemingly omnipotent

United States which tries to impose the self-serving process of globalization of France; retaliation against [America's] obstructionist, expendable, and unreliable hegemony in international politics; and retaliation against [America's] promotion of [its] flawed social model, which challenges the traditional construction of 'Frenchness'."[1] Indeed, all aspects of Kuisel's hypothesis have been proven true by the research of this thesis. This thesis only appends that French anti-Americanism also escalated after the Cold War because of France's retaliation against America's increasing cultural influence.

In the end, it is fair to ask if the investigation of this thesis matters. Does it contribute new understanding to French anti-Americanism? It does for two reasons. First, the depth of evidence provided in this thesis has proven with greater clarity and certainty than exists in scholarship that French anti-Americanism became more severe and complex in the post-Cold War era. Second, the conclusions of this thesis instil an important truth: contemporary French anti-Americanism and its escalating tendency cannot be explained by the latest crisis in Franco-American relations alone. This thesis has proven that a recent intensification of French anti-Americanism has more to do with dynamics in the 1990s than it does with twenty-first century Franco-American political disputes.

It remains to be seen if a change in France's government will help to resolve the crisis in Franco-American relations. However, if the recent Franco-American political disputes play but a minor role in the overall prevalence and intensification of contemporary French anti-Americanism, one should suspect that regardless of the terms

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[1] Richard Kuisel "The Gallic Rooster Crows Again," 9

between George W. Bush and the pro-American Nicolas Sarkosy, French anti-Americanism will remain.

APPENDIX 1:
French Political Parties: Political Views and Likely Anti-Americanisms

Position on the Political Spectrum:	Extreme Left		Left	Centre Right	Right		Extreme Right
Party Name:	Communiste	Parti Vert	**PS (Parti Socialiste)***	**UDF (Union pour la Démocratie Française)***	**UNP (Union Pour Mouvement Populaire)***		**Front Nationale***
Main Party Affiliates:	Marie-George Buffet	Dominique Voynet	Segolene Royal, Francois Hollande, Lionel Jospin Dominique Strauss-Kahn, Francois Mitterrand	Francois Bayrou	Jaques Chriac, Dominique De Villepin	Nicolas Sarkosy	Jean-Marie Le Pen
Characteristics:	Communism	Pro-Environment	Strong Social State ; Against outsourcing of French jobs and industry	Pro-European	Gaullist—Inependance Francaise Grand role de la France au niveau international	Pro-American ; Pro Economic Liberalism	Nationalist, Economic protectionism, Cultural protectionism, Racism
Likely Anti-Americanisms:	Anti-capitalist, anti-democratic	Anti-US big business	Anti-globalization, cultural protectionism	Assert power independent of the US	Resent American hegemony and American political dominance	American resentment used for political exploitation (rarely if ever at all)	Economic Protection, Cultural/ National preservation

*** These four parties represent the French population the most. Together, these parties represent 86% of the electorate. (2007 figures)**

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